

THE  
CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

No. 103.]

JULY, 1810.

[No. 7. Vol. IX.]

RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

EXTRACTS FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE OF BARTHOLOMEW ZIEGENBALGH AND HENRY PLUTSCHO, THE FIRST PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES TO INDIA.

(Continued from p. 336.)

Tranquebar, " **L**AST year, when Sept. 12, 1707. the ships returned to Europe, I\* fell dangerously ill; and the distemper holding me above a month, made me pine away to that degree, that both myself, and others with me, began to despair of my recovery. However, the Lord having been graciously pleased once more to restore me, it has now so much the more excited me, entirely to spend the rest of my days in the service of God, by how much the less my health was expected. My dear colleague having renewed with me this resolution, we began afresh to apply ourselves to the work we were sent about, notwithstanding the many oppositions we are like to encounter; most certainly believing, that God would never forsake us in a work sincerely begun for his glory.

" Our chief care was now to learn the Malabarian language, after being pretty well versed in the Portuguese. To facilitate this design, we maintained a Malabarian schoolmaster in our house: but still we were in the dark, as to the words themselves, and the genuine construction thereof; he being only able to teach us to read and write, but knowing nothing of the Portuguese, he could not give us any satisfactory inlet into the hardest constructions of this language. Soon after we fell ac-

\* Ziegenbalgh.

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quainted with a Malabarian, who heretofore had served the East-India company; and besides his own language, he spoke Portuguese, Danish, High and Low Dutch fluently enough. This man we hired, to be our translator; and by this means we made a choice collection of some thousands of Malabarian words, which we got presently by heart. Soon after we fell to the declensions and conjugations, and began to read books in this language. And all this went on successfully, by the blessing of God. Our governor hereupon procured us some rudiments of a Malabarian grammar, drawn up by a missionary, sent hither by the French king. Besides this, we met with some books, writ in Malabaric by Roman Catholics; which, though they were stocked with many pernicious errors, have however contributed a great deal towards the better imbibing this language, by furnishing us with such words as did savour of a more Christian style and temper; we being not a little put to it, how to find words expressive enough for the delivery of spiritual doctrines, and yet cleared from the leaven of heathenish fancies and superstitions.

" The best of these books contained a collection of the Gospel lessons, which proved very useful to us. This we first perused, picking out all such words and phrases as were fit for our design; and after they were imprinted upon our memory, we practically applied them in our daily conversation. After this, we went also through several other books. And by this means I made such advances within the

compass of eight months, that, by the assistance of divine grace, I was able to read, to write, to talk, and to understand this hard language, if delivered by others. Mr. Plutsch hath likewise made a considerable progress therein; though indeed a country so hot as this, doth not permit too fervent an application of the head. However, we thought it necessary now to agree, that whilst I was employed about the Malabar language, he might attempt the Portuguese; both these languages cutting out work enough for us every day. And hitherto he has spent two hours daily, in catechizing in Portuguese, as I have in Malabaric.

“Soon after our arrival here, some well-disposed Germans entreated us to give them some good instructions out of the word of God. We were glad of this opportunity, and set up an exercise of piety in our own house. On the same day we were to begin, the governor sent for us to dinner; and having discoursed the point with us, he said, that he neither could nor intended to hinder any way the work we were about; though he could be more glad, to see it publicly done in the Danish church here. We replied, we would begin in our own house, till we received further orders from him. Coming home, we found the house crowded with people to hear the word of God, whom we readily served as well as we could. But some ill-disposed men, highly displeased with our design, began to exclaim against it. However, this proved but a means to draw more people to our house, and some even of the first rank would now and then come to hear us; so that the room in our house was hardly big enough to hold them. At last the governor sent his secretary, and inquired, whether we had a mind to preach once a week in the church here? We said, we were ready for it at any time, if we had but the consent and approbation of the Danish ministers; which the governor, after

the removal of some obstacles, brought about at last. We presented the Danish church with two-and-twenty Psalm-books. And from that time, viz. from the month of December 1706, we have constantly continued to preach therein. We had abundance of difficulties to struggle with in carrying this point; but find now such a blessing springing up from thence, that it affords us matter of joy and comfort. By this means we had now a fair opportunity to lay the word of God before heathens, Mahometans, and Christians. Truly, we often did not know from whence to fetch the necessary supplies to support both spirit and body; having been all along engaged from morning till night, to converse with all sorts of people. But the Lord hath hitherto assisted us so powerfully, that both Christians and heathens begin to be convinced that God is with us; especially since they see, that by his grace we endeavour to render our life and conversation conformable to the doctrine we preach to them; which, as we find, leaves generally the strongest impression upon people's minds.

“We must needs say, that what we have undertaken hitherto, in singleness of heart, has been attended with the conviction of many, and the conversion of some souls. The first of our baptismal acts was solemnly performed in the Danish church with five heathens, which were christened, after they had given an account of all the articles of the Christian faith. This they did with such readiness of mind, that many old people were ashamed thereof, and we ourselves convinced they had a sound sense of what they outwardly performed. Nay, God hath assisted us so far, that we have been able to build a church among the Malabarians here; which seems the more marvellous to us, the greater the difficulties were we met with in bringing it about.” “We happened to fall acquainted with a man of an eminent family in this country,



who offered both to come over to our religion, and to raise a church at his own charge for our use; but there arose so many contests and broils about it, that he was forced, not only entirely to drop this design, but to remove also from hence to another place. Notwithstanding this disappointment, we, in the name of God, and in hopes of being supported by our king, laid the foundation of a church, bestowing thereon all whatever we could possibly spare from our yearly pension. Every one that saw it, laughed at it as a silly and rash design." "However, we prosecuted our design in the name of God, a friend sending fifty rix-dollars towards it. By this forwardness of our work, the enemies were confounded, and some of them did then contribute something themselves towards accomplishing the whole affair; which proved no small comfort to us. Thus is the building finished at last, and fitted up for a church-congregation. It lies without the town, in the midst of a multitude of Malabarians, near the high road, built all of stone. It was consecrated the 14th of August, which was the Eighth Sunday after Trinity, in the presence of a great conflux of heathens, Mahometans, and Christians; who had a sermon preached to them both in Portuguese and in Malabaric. This solemnity was performed to the no small astonishment of abundance of people, who visibly discovered the finger of God attending us all along in carrying on this work. And thus we have now, for seven weeks together, performed the public service in our Jerusalem (this being the name we have given to our new-built church), by preaching, catechizing, and administering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We continue also to preach every Wednesday, in our native language, in the Danish church, called Sion. Every Sunday morning we preach in our church Portuguese, and in the afternoon Malabaric, each sermon being concluded with a short catechizing of

children. The same is observed every Friday; only, that one day we perform it in Malabaric, and the other in Portuguese. Multitudes of people flock together to hear us, Malabarians, blacks, and Christians, every one being allowed to come in, let him be Heathen, Mahometan, Papist, or Protestant. However, our small congregation more nearly committed to our charge, have their seats fitted up for them.

"At this rate the work of God runs on a main. Our congregation consists of sixty-three persons; and another is to be baptized to-morrow. We hope more will shortly come over, there being a pretty many up and down, that have already received a favourable impression of the Christian religion. There is a blind man in our congregation, endued with a large measure of the Spirit of God, who begins to be very serviceable to us in the catechizing of others. He has such an holy zeal for Christianity, that every one is astonished at his fervent and affectionate delivery in points of religion. We cannot express what a tender love we bear to our new-planted congregation. Nay, our love is arrived to that degree, and our forwardness to serve this nation is come to that pitch, that we are resolved to live and to die with them; though, according to the tenor of our engagement, we might have liberty to return to Denmark after a stay of three or five years in this country. At least, we cannot harbour as yet any thoughts of returning home, though we be daily exposed to the persecutions of our enemies on all sides, and taken up all the day long with uninterrupted business to carry on the design once begun. I am sure you would wonder, if we should give you an account at large of all the oppositions we have met with hitherto. Yet all these engines, set on work by the devil, have only served the more gloriously to display the work of God, and to unite us the nearer to Him, who is the only support of all

the distressed. Heathens and Mahometans are kind enough to us, and love to be in our company; notwithstanding we have all along laid open to them the vanity of their idolatrous and superstitious worship. But those that pretend to be Christians, and are worse than heathens at the bottom, have shewn us all the spite and malice they ever could. However, there is a remnant left among them too, that love to be sincerely dealt with.

"All our endeavours are now entirely bent upon this, how we may be able to raise the work to a higher degree of perfection. We have sent some proposals to his Danish majesty relating to this point. It is true, the grace of God is the spring of all good motions: but if this should be accompanied with seasonable supplies, and beneficial contributions of public-spirited persons, we should then be enabled to lay a firm foundation for many noble establishments, tending to a thorough conversion of these wild and deluded heathens." "I do not question, but many well-disposed souls, and well-wishers to the public good, will gladly contribute something towards the supply of our wants. We have likewise desired, that two persons more might be sent over to assist us in the work so happily begun."

Oct. 7, 1707.—"Since my last, our congregation is still increased, and we are in hopes of seeing it still more and more enlarged. I send you here the four Gospels done into Malabaric, after having them carefully perused according to the original. To Mr. N. I send a catechism in the Malabarian tongue, translated by mine own hand. And you will find here two Malabaric sermons, preached by me in this language, to be delivered to Mr. N. The other eight Malabaric sermons, preached in our new church here, I would have sent to the professors of divinity at Hall: besides which, you have here a small book, exactly transcribed in Malabaric letters,

and containing the Gospels, as they are translated by papists."

"My dear colleague has begun to translate Mr. Freylinghausen's Fundamental System of Divinity, together with all the Scriptural places quoted in it. I perceive, I shall in time express myself as fluently in this heathenish language, as in my own; the continual practice of it rendering it more and more easy to me. When at times I take a walk in the country, I am surrounded with hundreds of Malabarians, to whom I can preach, whenever I please. They are wonderfully kind to me upon account of their language, and they like to argue with me about points of religion. It is not long since I had one of their idols made of gold, presented to me by such of the Malabarians as had received the Christian faith. It had been worshipped in one of their idol-temples, but we made of late a present of it to his majesty the king of Denmark.

"In the midst of this town is a very spacious building, which hath been heretofore the palace of a Malabarian prince. Should we be so happy as to see this put into our hands, we should then undoubtedly be able to enlarge our charity-school, and render it more beneficial to a great many people. However, for the present, we are destitute of all necessary supplies for carrying on the work; being in daily expectation of the happy arrival of the ships coming from Europe. I wish heartily, you would send us all sorts of authors, treating upon the several parts of philosophy, and especially upon the mathematics, wherein some of the pagans, as I find now, are pretty well versed. Truly, we do not design to stuff any body's brain with the useless trash of Aristotle's philosophy, though perhaps it may now and then prove some accidental help for conveying good notions to them about the substantial points of the Christian religion; true divinity being the main point we shall drive at in all our conversation with them.



Should we be enabled to accomplish our design in this, there is no question, but we should see a commotion in the whole Malabarian paganism; some of them being convinced already of the sottishness of their way of worship. Besides this, we wish we might be provided with books treating on church-history, on the various religions in the world, and particularly on the Mahometans, whom we frequently converse with. Likewise, with an account of the lives of pious souls, and other pieces of true and real Christianity. We do not doubt, but some will be willing to advance so useful a design by generous contributions."

*Aug. 22, 1708.*—"As the Portuguese and Malabaric language is of an absolute necessity to such as enter upon the propagation of the Gospel of Christ in these parts; so my colleague and I agreed at last, that, whilst he was taken up with the Portuguese, I should apply myself entirely to learn the Malabaric, to which I found now a singular inclination. By the gracious assistance of God, I made so considerable advances, that within the compass of six months, I began to perform the part of a catechist in this language. At first we spent four hours a day in teaching, *viz.* two hours in catechizing some Malabarians in their native tongue, and two in instructing those that understood the Portuguese: the rest of the day was employed about practising these two languages, and conversing with heathens, Moors, and Mahometans. But the more the number of those that came over to Christianity increased, the more our labour increased also; and our congregation being now become pretty numerous, we went without any delay about building a church, for the better service of our young Christians. This design we accomplished at last, after having passed through abundance of difficulties, which the Devil did raise against it. It cost 250 perdots, and was consecrated August the 14th, 1707, and called New Jerusalem.

"From this day we have constantly preached therein three times a week, both in Malabaric and Portuguese. As for myself (to whose share the learning of the native language of this country is fallen), I have explained hitherto the articles of the Christian faith in six-and-twenty Sundays' sermons. These I dictated to a Malabaric amanuensis, and then got them by heart, word by word. Every Friday I catechize both old and young, and on Wednesday I repeat with them the last Sunday's sermon, but in an easy, and catechetical manner: these plain and catechetical exercises having done much good to such heathens and Mahometans as use to be present in great numbers. My colleague keeps the same method with the Portuguese tongue; we endeavouring, as much as possibly we can, to go hand in hand together, and with one spirit to promote the same work.

"As for the order I observe daily in the management of my pastoral function, and in preparing myself towards it, it is as follows: after morning prayer, I explain the heads of our catechism, from six to seven. From seven to eight, I repeat my Malabaric vocabulary, and the phrases gathered in this language. From eight to twelve, I am entirely employed about reading such Malabar books as I have never read before; a Malabaric poet and writer being present at the same time to assist me. The poet is to give me a fuller insight into all the circumstances of each story recorded in the book, and to clear up the more dark and intricate passages of their poems: but the writer is to take down in writing such expressions as I am as yet unacquainted with. At twelve o'clock, I go to dinner, having appointed one to read to me all this while out of the holy Bible. Betwixt one and two, I usually rest a little, the excessive heat in these countries not permitting a man to enter upon serious business immediately after dinner. The hours

from two to three, I spend in catechizing; and then I fall again to read Malabarian books till five, when we begin an exercise of piety in our native tongue, for the edification of the Germans residing here. This lasteth till six. From six to seven, we meet for a mutual conference, every one giving an account of the management of that particular charge which is committed to his trust, and of the difficulties it is attended with. After this, we consider of proper means to remove such things as do retard the work, and endeavour to order the whole matter to the best advantage. When this is over, a Malabarian reads to me out of one of their books, till eight o'clock." "By this means I have considerably improved myself in this language. From eight to nine, I am at supper; which being done, I enter upon a short examination, both with my children and myself, about the things of that day, and then I conclude my day's work with singing and praying.

"This is a succinct draught of the management of my labours in this place, which, however, is interrupted in those days wherein I use to preach; and besides this, by many visits I receive from the Malabarians and Moors, being unwilling to put away any one that comes to confer with me on religious subjects. Some of their poets come now and then a great way off for this purpose; whose visits I return, whenever conveniently I can. But besides this, I make often a step into the adjacent towns and villages, and take a view of the schools of the heathens. Wherever I come, I am crowded with Moors and Malabarians, whom I discourse about the way to salvation. I must needs say, that notwithstanding this people be led away by a world of errors and delusions, they nevertheless give at times so pertinent answers in matters of religion, as perhaps I should have never thought on before." "It requires an experimental wisdom to convey a saving knowledge into

their mind, and to convince them of the folly of heathenism, and of the truth of Christianity. And this wisdom is not to be had in the barren schools of logic and metaphysics, but must be learned at another university, and derived from God himself for this purpose. The best way is, to keep the mind constantly in that temper and serenity, that the great God may influence it himself, and qualify it for so important a work."

"The heathens have abundance of subterfuges, whereby they endeavour to vindicate themselves, and to frustrate the design of a missionary. If Christians find one error in the doctrine of the heathens, these will find ten in the life of the Christians. It would be infinitely better, if never any Christian had been among them; for then their mind would be less prepossessed against Christianity, the free reception whereof is now stifled by many inveterate sins and customs, they have all along observed among Christians. However, the Lord is still able to reclaim some, and to break the chains of these headstrong evasions, whereby they are restrained from embracing the Gospel of Christ.

"The greatest efforts must be bestowed on the education of children. In these a solid and lasting foundation may sooner be laid, than in those that are grown old in their heathenish fancies and superstitions. For this reason, we soon after our arrival here, began to set up a charity-school, which afterwards was followed by another, and are hitherto both managed successfully by the blessing of God. My colleague is taken up with a Portuguese school (where also Danish and German is taught); as I am with a Malabaric one, being assisted therein by two ushers. Eight children are freely boarded and provided with all necessaries; and we are resolved to maintain all the children of such parents as come over to Christianity, that hereby we may gain the full



management of them betimes, and give them such an education as is like to produce some good effects in time. We heartily wish to be supplied with a Malabaric and Portuguese printing-press, to save the expensive charges of getting such books transcribed as are necessary for carrying on this work. I have hitherto employed six Malabaric writers in my house; which, however, considering our present circumstances, will prove too chargeable in time. It is true, those books which we get from the Malabar heathens must be entirely transcribed, or else bought up for ready money, if people will part with them; but such as lay down the grounds of our holy religion, and are to be dispersed among the heathens, must be carefully printed off for this design." "By this short account" (an account which ought to be read and studied by every missionary) "you may learn, that we do not trifle away our time, or spend it to no purpose in these parts. And as by the gracious assistance of the Lord we shall farther endeavour to answer the character of missionaries; so we hope you will be ready to second, on your side, these weak endeavours, and contribute what lies in you towards gaining more ground among the heathens. We did not a little rejoice when we were informed, how graciously his majesty was disposed to favour this work, and in effect to promote it by a considerable sum remitted lately for this design. But this present being unfortunately lost, and never come to our hands, we have not been able hitherto, much to enlarge our establishment among the heathens here."

This last letter was accompanied with 26 sermons in the Malabaric language, preached at Tranquebar by Mr. Ziegenbalgh, and a detailed account of two Malabaric dictionaries which he had compiled in order to facilitate the acquisition of the language. One of these dictionaries contained above 20,000 words and phrases in common use, the Mala-

baric being in one column, in another the same word in the Latin letter and according to the Latin pronunciation; in a third the German. This work had employed him two years, and in that time he had read over 200 Malabaric authors. The other was a poetical dictionary, there being as great a difference between the vulgar and poetical Malabaric as between Latin and High Dutch. This dictionary, he confessed, was of no great use in delivering the word of God. It was a key however to untie many knots and difficulties in their poets, and without it he should not have been able to confute their silly tales and fables, which he was very anxious to do.

It is impossible not to admire and venerate the indefatigable exertions of these eminently apostolical characters in the service of their Master. Whether we regard the extent and rapidity of their literary acquirements, or their unwearied endeavours to spread the knowledge of Christ, or the success which attended those endeavours, we must stand equally astonished; and we are forced to resolve all into the special assistance and blessing of that God whose they were and whom with a single eye they served in the Gospel of his Son.

(To be continued.)

QUOTATIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW, COLLATED WITH THE SEPTUAGINT.

(Continued from p. 262.)

MATT. xii. 18—21. Ἰδοὺ, ὁ παῖς μου, ὁ κρητιστὰς, ὁ ἀγαπητὸς μου, εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου. ἤσσω τὸ πνεῦμα μου ἐπ' αὐτόν, καὶ κρείσσιν τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ἀπαγγελεῖ. Οὐκ εἰσέτι, θὺς κραυγήσει, θὺς ἀκούσει τις ἐν ταῖς πλατείαις τῆς ῥωντῆς αὐτοῦ. Καλαμὸν συντετριμμένον θὺς κατεαῖ, καὶ λίθον τυφόμενον θὺς σάσει· εὖς ἀν' ἐκδάλῃ εἰς νίκος τῆς κρείττης. Καὶ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ εὐνῇ εὐπιστεῖ.—Sept. Isa. xlii. 1—4. Ἰακωβὸς ὁ παῖς μου, ἀντιληψόμεαι αὐτόν. Ἰσραὴλ ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου, προσεδέξατο αὐτόν ἡ ψυχὴ μου, εὐδόκησεν τὸ πνεῦμα μου ἐπ' αὐ-





—Sept. Gen. ii. 24. *Ενεκεν τὸτε κα-  
ταλειψεί ἄνθρωπος τὴν πατέρα αὐτοῦ  
καὶ τὴν μητέρα, καὶ προσκολληθήσε-  
ται πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἑσιν-  
ται ἡ ὅλῃ εἰς σάρκα μιαν.* The quo-  
tation of the Evangelist is nearly,  
though not verbally, from the Sep-  
tuagint; which entirely accords  
with the Hebrew, except as it inserts  
the word *ὅλῃ*, *two*, or *twain*, which  
is not in the original text.

—7. There does not seem here  
any intended quotation; the words,  
however, vary from those of the  
Sept. Dent. xxiv. 1.

—18, 19. This reference to the  
Commandments accords to the Sep-  
tuagint; except as the fifth is placed  
after the others, and the latter part  
of it is omitted.

xxi. 5. *Εἰπατε τῇ θυγατρὶ Σιών  
ἰδοὺ ὁ βασιλεὺς σε ἐρχεται σὺ πρᾶς,  
καὶ ἐπιβεβηκώς ἐπὶ ὄνον, καὶ πολλὸν  
ὄνον ὑποζυγίῃ.*—Sept. Zach. ix. 9.  
*Χαίρε σφόδρα θυγατὲρ Σιών κηρύσσε  
θυγατὲρ Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἰδοὺ ὁ βασιλεὺς σε  
ἐρχεται σὺ, δίκαιος καὶ σωζών, αὐτὸς  
πρᾶς, καὶ ἐπιβεβηκώς ἐπὶ ὑποζυγίῳ  
καὶ πολλὸν νέον.*—“Rejoice greatly,  
O daughter of Sion; proclaim, O  
daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy  
King cometh unto thee, just and a  
Saviour (or, *saving*); he himself  
meek, and riding on a beast of bur-  
den, even a young colt.” It is ob-  
servable that the Greek word for an  
ass is not mentioned in the Septua-  
gint; though three words in the  
Hebrew restrict the meaning to that  
animal. Any other beast of burden  
may be meant by *ὑποζυγίον*, or its  
young by *πολλὸν νέον*; and perhaps  
the translators chose to use this more  
general language, rather than ex-  
plicitly declare that Zion’s glorious  
King should come riding on an ass’s  
colt. It is, however, evident that  
the Evangelist did not here quote  
from the Septuagint:—he leaves  
out some things contained in the  
prophet, and the first words seem  
to have been taken from Isaiah  
lxii. 11.

—13. The quotation is in the  
words of the Septuagint, which ex-  
actly render the Hebrew. Jeremiah

vii. 11 seems rather alluded to than  
quoted.

—16. The quotation is here ver-  
batim from the Septuagint, which  
immaterially varies from the He-  
brew.

—42. This quotation is verbatim  
from the Septuagint, which exactly  
agrees with the Hebrew text.

xxii. 24. Here is merely a re-  
ference to the passage, not a quota-  
tion.

—32. The quotation agrees, as  
might have been expected, with the  
Septuagint, but omits the first clause,  
*Εγώ εἰμι ὁ θεὸς τῶ πατρὸς σου* (Sept.  
Exod. iii. 6), “I am the God of thy  
father;” and adds the article before  
the other clauses, *ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραάμ, &c.*

(To be continued.)

#### FAMILY SERMONS. No. XIX.

Luke xxiii. 42, 43.—*And he said  
unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when  
thou comest into thy kingdom. And  
Jesus said unto him, Verily I say  
unto thee, this day shalt thou be  
with me in Paradise.*

It is a common but just remark,  
that the best things, when abused,  
become the worst. This strikingly  
appears, not only in the case of re-  
ligion in general, which is too often  
made the ground of great abuses  
and even of great crimes, but in  
regard to particular parts of religion,  
and to none more than the history  
of the text. My object in this dis-  
course will be, with the divine  
blessing, to prevent any improper  
use being made of this passage, and  
to point out the lesson which it is  
calculated to teach. The words of  
the text naturally lead us to con-  
sider, 1st, The conduct of the thief;  
and, 2dly, The conduct of Christ.

I. With respect to the former  
character of the thief, the Bible  
gives us little information. Whether  
he was old or young in guilt;  
whether the crime for which he  
suffered was the effect of some sud-  
den temptation or unusual distress,  
or was one of many acts of robbery

and murder, we are left in doubt. Some writers have inclined to make him much worse, and others to make him better, than Scripture gives us the means of knowing; just as their different systems seemed to require the one or the other supposition. But this much is clear, that he had been guilty, by his own admission, of crimes which fully deserved the condemnation he met with; and, had there been any circumstances in his case which were fitted to excite pity, it is probable that Barabbas, noted as he had been for the worst crimes, would not have been saved in preference to him. So far also was this man from being penitent in the first instance, that he appears to have joined with the other malefactor in reviling Jesus; for, says one of the Evangelists, "The thieves also which were crucified with him cast the same in his teeth," or, as another expresses it, "they reviled him." But our business is not so much with his former conduct, as with what is related of him in the text. In this there appear to me to be some things particularly deserving of notice.

1. He gives every proof, which in his case was possible, of sincere repentance. The striking acknowledgment which he makes of his guilt is one proof of this. "Dost not thou fear God," says he to his suffering companion, "seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds." That confession of sin which is extorted by the fear of worldly punishment, it is true, is no proof of repentance: but here the punishment was already inflicted, and confession could neither prevent nor soften it. And even if we could suppose that this man had some motive of interest for confessing his guilt, yet it is plain that in the same breath to acknowledge Christ as the Messiah, was the way rather to enrage than to sooth his judges. The confession of sin, in his state of suffering, might also arise from the weakness or agony of the mo-

ment; but here we have every appearance of thought and recollection. Acknowledgment of sin, it may further be said, is the mere act of the lips, and might proceed, in his case (as it is to be feared in that of too many others), from a vague hope of avoiding, by means of it, the divine vengeance in a future world. To this there is but one reply: Christ, who knew the heart, saw that it arose from a better source: he saw that it was the fruit of real penitence, and we therefore ought to be satisfied.

2. His faith in Christ is very remarkable. He received Christ in his character of King and Saviour, at the very moment when to a common eye he would appear stripped of all claim to such a dignity,—a poor forsaken malefactor, nailed to the cross. But whom did the thief recognize in this crucified malefactor? One who was soon to burst the bars of the grave, to ascend to the throne of his kingdom, to "lead captivity captive, and to bestow gifts on men:" one who could take whom he would for his subjects; who could raise even himself, guilty as he was, acquitted and triumphant, to the courts of heaven.—"Lord, remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom." This was faith embracing, in opposition to the evidence of sight, the greatest objects, and exercised under the most trying circumstances. "Faithful found among the faithless," he believed when all around him doubted or derided. No disguise could veil the Son of God from the eye of faith. The Jews, who had seen him heal the sick and raise the dead, called him still the carpenter's son. His disciples, who had seen him transfigured, conversing with the inhabitants of heaven, and clothed with its glory, were ready to abandon their hope: they forsook him and fled. This man beheld him weak and expiring, scourged and mocked, bloated by sufferings and stained with blood, and yet saw in him a King, yea, the King of heaven. Can we require stronger



proof of faith? Could faith be shewn under more difficult circumstances?

3. It is of importance to remark, that, according to his means, this man proved the sincerity of his repentance and the soundness of his faith by his works. These, short as was his life, shewed that his faith was of that nature which alone justifies. Consider his dying words. "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." And then turning to Jesus, he added, in the words of the text, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Here the confession of his guilt, the rebuke of his companion and the exhortation implied in it to fear God, the vindicating of Christ and the homage of the heart paid to him, are the best proofs of which the case admits, that his faith was a living principle, and that the God who had taught him to believe, had taught him at the same time to act, and speak, and feel, in the spirit of a Christian.

4. There is another circumstance in the conduct of the thief which should be noticed. He displayed not only repentance and faith and a conduct becoming his state, but a greater enlargement of views and spirituality of mind than were shewn by the disciples themselves. They conceived the kingdom of Christ to be temporal: this man saw in him the Monarch of a heavenly kingdom, to the throne of which he was to ascend from the cross. His disciples also, far from being convinced by the nature and manner of his suffering, were staggered at the idea of his suffering at all; and, instead of glorying in his cross, forsook him and fled. But, under divine grace, it was by the very sufferings of Christ that this man was convinced. He saw with what dignity he suffered: he heard him, even in the midst of exquisite torture, pray for his enemies. He saw in him a

greatness far surpassing any thing human, and at once, with the centurion at the foot of the cross, exclaimed, "Truly this is the Son of God!"

You see then, in this converted thief, real repentance and faith, a conduct corresponding to these, enlargement of views, and spirituality of mind. I insist the more on these qualities, because they are of the very essence of religion. They are qualities without which he could not have been saved, and without which no individual among us can be saved. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "He that believeth not shall be damned." "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "We look not to the things which are seen, but to the things which are not seen." "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." It is a matter, then, of eternal moment, whether your character be that of this penitent thief; whether, in viewing the cross of Christ, the same feelings have been wrought in you; whether you feel your guilt while you acknowledge it; whether you believe in Christ; whether you adorn his doctrine by a suitable temper and conduct; whether you are ready, when the occasion calls for it, to rebuke sin and defend the cause of Christ; whether you are looking not at the things which are temporal, but at those which are eternal; whether your views and feelings are spiritual.—You have not, you say, committed the crimes of the thief. If you have not, praise that grace of God which has preserved you from them. Still, repentance, faith, holiness, spirituality, are no less necessary to you than to him. Think not of the crimes of this man, but of his conversion: view him as the timid, humble, affectionate believer in Christ; and remember, that though few who live like him may die as he did, yet, that all must die as he did to be happy.

II. I come now to consider the conduct of Christ on this interesting

occasion. "And Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee, this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

1. Now here I would first notice, the greatness which was shewn in this answer of Christ.—When a person is in a state of pain, we are ready to make large allowances for any hasty or peevish expressions he may employ. If insult and wrong are added to pain, we do not wonder if the sufferer should find no place for tenderness, no ear for our petitions. Consider then the circumstances of Christ. He was at that moment suffering for the sins of the whole world. The burden of the universe lay on him. The pangs of myriads centred in his single person. And to pain were added insult and mockery—a reed for a sceptre, and thorns for a crown. In this state how does he receive the petition of the thief? Does human weakness shew itself? Have his sufferings or his wrongs roused his anger, or extinguished his compassion? Hear his answer! It is the calm reply of a monarch liberal of his favours. It shews all the affection of a parent forward to grant the request of his child. There is nothing in history to be compared with it.—Let those who are disposed to do homage to greatness, render it here.

2. But we may observe in this reply, the power of Christ.—That power appeared now to be reduced to its lowest ebb. The schemes of his enemies appeared to have succeeded; and he was led as a malefactor to the cross. But he chose to shew his power, not by causing their schemes to fail in the outset, but by exerting, under the most oppressive sufferings that can be imagined, a power which no human force could controul. It is always the office of the supreme power in a state to pardon the guilty, or to reprieve the condemned; and this is the power which Christ takes to himself. And be it remembered, that the Bible gives us no other instance of good men pretending to this power.

3. The answer of Christ is also a remarkable display of his grace.—It was when surrounded by his persecutors; it was when loaded with the insults and tormented by the cruelty of man, that Christ thus granted pardon and promised happiness to the penitent thief. But consider, besides, who this penitent was: he was a man, by his own confession, justly nailed to the cross for his crimes. Was there any thing in his past conduct to recommend him to the favour of Christ? Had he any title to divine mercy? Or were his former habits such as to lead him at once to avow his guilt, to profess his faith in Christ, and to rebuke sin? If his natural goodness could have recovered him, why did it not recover him sooner, for it was always as free to act as now? No! The conversion of this man is an astonishing monument of the grace of God. It is a case in which God, as it were, draws aside the veil behind which he usually works, and shews himself employed for the benefit of man. The laws of nature act so calmly and uniformly, that we are tempted to forget that there is a God who controuls them; but let some storm or convulsion shake the order of nature, or some miracle change it, and we say at once, "It is the Lord's doing." And so it is in the works of divine grace. God sees us forgetful of the mercy which saves us, and of the Holy Spirit which transforms us. In compassion to our weakness, he gives us some instance of the power and freeness of divine grace, so striking, that he who does not believe, would not believe though one rose from the dead. And yet we ought to know, that it is just as free and undeserved in the case of every man who is saved, as in the case of this malefactor. God is still at work, though we see him not. The penitent believer, who knows any thing of his own heart, will know this; and, while he ascribes all that is sinful to himself, will rejoice to ascribe all his salvation, from first to last, to God.



I shall now conclude, by noticing the opposite ways in which this subject is sometimes abused.

1. One class of men speak of the case of the thief as so singular as to teach us nothing, and as not intended to enlarge the hopes of the Christian. A man, they say, is here saved by a miracle, and we cannot now expect a miracle to save us. But I would ask, is not the moral of this story the doctrine of the whole Bible? Does that ever teach us that repentance at any period is impossible, or unavailing? Does it say to any man, *Your sin is unpardonable; the blood of Christ cannot cleanse, the Spirit of God cannot change, you?* Oh no! The ministers of God are charged with a message of grace and mercy to all; even to those who are grown old in sin; to sinners in the eleventh hour of life. Here they may see a man as deep in guilt, and at least as much straitened for time, as themselves. They may see him pardoned, changed, a worshipper of Christ, an instructor in righteousness. Are such persons then disposed to regard conversion as beyond their reach? Are they considering their corruption as so rooted, that it cannot now be removed, but that they must carry it to the bar of God's judgment, there to witness against them, and to go down with them into the pit of perdition? Let me tell them, that while there is life there is hope. This case is recorded that such should not despair, but should learn the unsearchable riches of the grace of God. And the same God lives to pardon, the same Son to intercede, and the same Spirit to sanctify. The fountain of a Saviour's blood is not exhausted; and he who washes in that fountain shall be made whole. Let, then, the wretched, despairing penitent raise himself from the ground where he lies, and view this monument, which the hand of God has raised for him. Let him behold, beside the cross of Christ, another cross, from which one who was, like himself, a sinner, but a penitent,

ascended to heaven. Let him then enter on the work of his conversion. Let him call on the same Redeemer, now entered into his kingdom, to remember him. And, while he contemplates the scene described in the text, let him say to God; "Our fathers have told us the noble works which thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them. Arise, O Lord, and deliver me for thy Name's sake."

2. Another class of persons consider the case of the thief as by no means singular; and they are secretly encouraged by it to defer their repentance to a future period. But I would beseech them to consider carefully the circumstances of this case, both as they respect Christ, and as they respect the thief. It seems to have been the design of God to unite in the life and death of our Saviour things the most opposite to each other, to stamp him with the opposite characters of God and man. He is born in a manger, but attended by angels. He has not where to lay his head, but exercises powers which might command all the wealth of the world. So here, in the hour of his worldly disgrace, in that hour when the triumph of his enemies seemed complete, it might please God that he should be seen dragging, as it were, at the wheels of his chariot, Sin and Death, those enemies who had subdued the world. It could happen but once that the Son of God should die; and that event therefore was likely to be accompanied by some remarkable interference, some extraordinary operation of the hand of God.

But the case of the thief is also peculiar. He repented at the hour of death! Does any one doubt that this is a peculiar case? Those at least will not doubt it who are often called to visit the beds of the dying. Thousands die among us without time for a single prayer. Thousands find the sick bed a bed of torture, and wear out the wretched remnant of life, not in attending to the concerns of the soul, but in trying to

relieve a tormented body. Thousands sink at once into a state of insensibility, from which nothing on this side the grave shall rouse them. Thousands die, as they live, presuming on their own fancied goodness, or on the boundless mercy of God. Thousands die, believing they shall recover, and therefore deferring the work of repentance. And even when appearances are more favourable, there is still much ground to doubt whether the penitence of a dying bed be sincere. A minister, who had large opportunities of observing the lives of criminals condemned to death and afterwards reprieved, told me, that although he had known many whose penitence shewed every mark of sincerity while the stroke of death hung over them, yet that he had never known one, even of these, who, on being reprieved, did not return to his former vicious and profligate courses. Why, indeed, should it be otherwise? Why should we expect to repent at a future period, if we repent not now? Is it that men are more likely to forsake sins, when they have longer practised them? Is God likely to vouchsafe larger portions of his Spirit to those who shall the longest have resisted and quenched it? Is the hour of weakness and agony the fit hour for the greatest work of the life of man; for the work for which every man finds the longest life too short?—I do not mean to say, that the repentance of a dying bed is never sincere. The dying thief was a true penitent, and therefore there may be others; particularly where the illness is long; where the faculties are preserved; where there is some acquaintance with religious truth; where the bodily pain is not violent; where the friends around him have courage, and love, and piety enough to let the dying man know his true state. But, it is not because one man has fallen safely from a precipice, that men in their senses will venture to follow him. And remember, that, in the case of those who have really repented, there may

be this difference from that of any of us, that they never *deliberately* delayed the work of repentance. No one, however, who hears this sermon, can come to his dying bed in such circumstances. We know the necessity of repentance; we know, that, except we repent, we must perish; and therefore, if any one among us delays the work even for a day, he places himself in a situation in which he has at least no Scriptural ground for hope.

Let us then consider our state. We are placed in awful circumstances. We stand on the very border of eternity. Surely, none of us will be so desperate as to rush into the very jaws of destruction. God forbid!—We have, it is true, been long impenitent. We have long been vain and trifling. It is of thy mercy, O Lord, that we have not long since been consumed. O that we may now turn from our sins to serve the living God! “Do thou touch our hardened hearts. Do thou change our evil habits. Do thou cleanse us by the blood of Christ. Do thou sanctify us by thy Spirit.” May this be our prayer to God, and may we all find that he is the God who heareth and who answereth prayer. Amen.

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*For the Christian Observer.*

#### ON INTELLECTUAL DIFFIDENCE.

THE faculties of the human mind are limited in their operation. This is a truth universally acknowledged, because it is too obvious to be denied. The most intelligent observer of the appearances which the material world presents, and the most profound inquirer into the constitution of mind, are equally called to investigate phenomena too vast and multifarious for their most expanded intellects to embrace: every accession of knowledge tends to convince them of their ignorance; and every step which they take in the road to perfection, reminds them that perfection is unattainable in the present stage of



existence. "One of the most valuable effects of genuine philosophy," says a celebrated modern philosopher, "is to remind us of the limited powers of the human understanding, and to revive those natural feelings of wonder and admiration at the spectacle of the universe, which are apt to languish in consequence of long familiarity. The most profound discoveries which are placed within the reach of our researches, lead to a confession of human ignorance; for while they flatter the pride of man, and increase his power, by enabling him to trace the simple and beautiful laws by which physical events are regulated, they call his attention at the same time to those general and ultimate facts, which bound the narrow circle of his knowledge, and which, by evincing to him the operation of powers whose nature must for ever remain unknown, serve to remind him of the insufficiency of his faculties to penetrate the secrets of the universe."

Men, however, frequently admit in speculation what in practice they deny. That our intellectual powers are circumscribed in their operation within very narrow bounds, is readily confessed; but the humiliating truth is seldom made the guide of consequent conduct. "Vain man would be wise, though he be born as the wild ass's colt." Aiming at perfection in knowledge, he feels a secret dissatisfaction and restlessness of mind, so long as he is conscious of ignorance on any subject. Acting as if his faculties, in their present state, were susceptible of unlimited expansion, he applies them to the investigation of those objects, whose nature can only be comprehended by infinite and uncreated intelligence. This conduct originates in an ignorance of his own mind, conjoined with an impertinent self-sufficiency. Its baneful effects are too manifest to be concealed, and too alarming to be palliated. They escaped not the observation of the wisest of men, and did not fail to excite his solicitude to prevent their

recurrence. Hence we find on record this important admonition, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding\*."

The *imperfection of the human mind* in the present stage of its existence, is sufficient of itself to convince us of the impropriety of placing too great a reliance on its noblest powers. It shall, therefore, be the object of this paper to shew the importance of *intellectual diffidence*, or, of being *distrustful of our own understandings*, when called to discharge certain departments of duty.

1. We should beware of reposing too great confidence in the powers of our own minds, when employed in the investigation of *moral and religious truth*.

Truth and error are, in certain cases, so blended together, that the broad line which separates them is scarcely discernible. Circumstances seem to bear equally in favour of both sides, and the precise track to be pursued is clouded with uncertainty. In such situations as these it becomes necessary to put Pilates' question: "What is truth?" The whole of our mental forces must be concentrated, and directed to this one object—the possession of truth untainted by the slightest contamination of error. Whatever rank the truth to be discovered may hold in the scale of importance, we must be careful not to place too much dependence on our own intellectual powers; at best they are extremely apt to err. Perverse associations give rise to foolish prejudices, which too frequently warp the judgment, and render the mind hermetically sealed against the truth. Blind credulity, or unlimited scepticism, flow as the native streams of this polluted fountain. In modern times, the latter has had the most general diffusion, and its poisonous qualities have been productive of the most deleterious effects. Facts incorporated with the histories of philosophy and religion, combine in attesting the truth of this

\* Prov. iii. 5.

assertion. Imagining it a mark of superior genius to doubt of every thing which has received the sanction of popular belief, men have been led to call in question the most obvious truths, to indulge a sceptical humour on almost every subject, and to oppose with virulent hostility all established opinions. Whether we regard the conduct of these men as the effect of prejudice, of a desire of singularity, or of an extravagant love of philosophizing; or trace it directly to the latent but powerful influence of a proud understanding; it equally evinces the fallibility of the human mind, and the dangerous consequences which result from an implicit reliance on its aid in the investigation of truth.

As the truths connected with religion and morality are of all others the most important, so the baneful effects of scepticism indulged in regard to these truths, must be worthy of our most serious attention. By the survey of these effects, we shall naturally be led to *pride of reason*, as their final cause. Men there have been, and there still are, in the world, who hesitate not to call in question the existence of a First Cause, and, if possible, to dismiss from their creed all ideas of supernatural agency. The source of their scepticism it is not difficult to trace; for in the features of the progeny are portrayed the lineaments of the parent. Their understandings, being unable to trace the relations of causes and effects, or being baffled in their attempts to comprehend the mode of the divine existence, have been led to conceal their imperfection by a flat denial of what lies beyond their reach. In this way dependence on the human mind leads to direct and unblushing Atheism.

When a system of truth is proposed, and when men profess to take that system for their standard of faith and of practice, it might naturally be expected, that an appeal would be made to it in every case of doubt, and that its decision

would invariably be final. It is not more lamentable than astonishing, however, that many, who profess to take the Scriptures for their standard of faith and of practice, do not submit their understandings to its decisions. They either reject those truths which reason was unable of itself to discover, or else they dismiss from their creed those doctrines which reason is unable to comprehend. Those who reject those truths of revelation which are not confirmations of what reason discovered, insinuate that a revelation was in a great measure, if not wholly, unnecessary; and that Socrates expected a useless teacher, when he said, "We must wait till we learn from an instructor who careth for us, and has a wonderful concern for our welfare, in what manner we are to conduct ourselves with regard to God and our fellow-creatures." They are guilty of the most daring impiety, in rejecting what God has thought worthy of being revealed, and in making divine truth bend to the dictates of human reason. In this way dependence on the powers of man renders Christianity only a more perfect species of Deism.

The same pride of reason has too often led men to class with unprofitable speculations, those doctrines which the human understanding is unable to comprehend when revealed. These votaries of reason either imagine that these doctrines are contrary to the light of nature, or conclude that, because they are incomprehensible, they cannot be proper objects of faith. The former of these ideas can be corrected only by a careful study of the doctrines in question, as revealed in the sacred volume, conjoined with fervent prayer to God for direction. The latter contradicts one of the first principles of philosophy—namely, that though we cannot believe what is *against* reason, we may rationally believe, upon competent evidence, what is *above* reason. To act consistently, these men should disbelieve every truth which their understandings are



unable to comprehend. If a man denies the existence of mind, because he cannot understand its nature, and can only define it by the operations of which he is conscious; to act consistently, he should also deny the existence of matter, because he can only judge of it by its visible and tangible qualities. If a man denies the communication of motion by thought, which we ascribe to spirit; to act consistently, he should also deny the communication of motion by impulse, which we ascribe to matter. We cannot tell how particles of light are propagated from the radiant point; and do we therefore deny the existence of light? We cannot tell how the blood circulates in our veins, and do we therefore deny that it is the medium of nutriment and vigour? We cannot unfold the nature of that union which subsists between body and mind; nor can we explain their mutual influence; and do we therefore conclude that they are unconnected or independent on each other? There is not a leaf that rustles in the breeze; there is not a flower that decks the fields; there is not an insect that wantons in the sun-beam, or flits along the ambient air; there is not a particle of sand by the sea wave, whose properties can all be described by the wisest of men; and do all men therefore become the dupes of modern scepticism as to the existence of the material world? Why then do men presume to arraign the incomprehensible God at the bar of their limited understandings, and to reject those doctrines which he has not made level to human capacity? Why do men reject the whole of Christianity because some of its doctrines are mysterious? In the one case, they resemble the man who discredits his senses, because he cannot understand the nature of the objects which surround him. In the other, they resemble the man who discontinues the practice of extinguishing fire by water, because he cannot understand why oil poured

on the same flame would increase the conflagration. It would be impiety to say, that it was impossible for God to make every thing which he has thought fit to reveal, level to the human understanding; but certainly it is not irrational to expect that whatever proceeds from an Infinite Being should bear some traces of infinity. When an author produces a work bearing marks of great profundity of thought and research, we naturally expect that every work proceeding from the same author should bear some resemblance to the first in both of these respects. It is sufficient to verify the title of a *revelation*, if additional light be thrown upon subjects previously involved in uncertainty, and if truths be made known of which the human mind could previously form no conception. In the revelation of God to his creatures, every thing essential to salvation is clearly made known, and those truths which are now seen "darkly as through a glass," are reserved to be fully unveiled in that world of light where the boundaries of intellectual vision shall be enlarged to embrace them. Thus, the effects of too great a reliance on the powers of the human understanding, in leading some men to detract from the Gospel its peculiar doctrines, and others to downright infidelity, may serve to convince us of the importance of intellectual diffidence in the search after truth.

There is one error of an opposite description to those which have now been noticed, which is equally remote from that intellectual diffidence which we are now attempting to recommend. The error to which we refer is that of endeavouring to simplify the Gospel by explaining what cannot and what was never intended to be explained. This is an error into which a misguided zeal has frequently led well-meaning Christians. They are not aware that the *explanation* of a mystery is its *annihilation*, and that their attempts can only injure the

cause which they wish to promote. The same plan of simplification has led men to form artificial representations of the divine nature, and thus to introduce all the errors of idolatry. It is with the intellectual powers as it is with the external senses: objects placed in an obscure light are not discernible, owing to a defect in the medium; and very luminous objects cannot be beheld, owing to the natural imbecility of the optic nerve. Some objects of the understanding are unknown to us because of the want of due information; and there are others of which we are ignorant, because they exceed the measure of our comprehension. Of this latter kind are the doctrines which these men endeavour to explain. The human mind cannot receive them in its present embryo state; and, to make the attempt, is as foolish as it would be to endeavour to make the infant on the breast comprehend the pursuits of the philosopher. "We ought not," says Lord Bacon, "to attempt to draw down or submit the mysteries of God to our reason; but, on the contrary, to raise and advance our reason to the divine truth." The mysterious doctrines of Christianity constitute its peculiar glory, for it is their splendour which dazzles the eyes of feeble mortals. Instead, therefore, of vainly attempting to make them less mysterious, the Christian should exhibit them in all their native lustre to the admiration of the world. A becoming sense of the imperfection of the human understanding, would serve as a corrective to this, as well as the other errors to which we have already alluded.

Hitherto our attention has been called to truths of a doctrinal nature. It may be proper, before concluding this part of the subject, to turn our thoughts for a little, to the effect of too great a dependence on human reason, in regard to those parts of the divine word which are professedly of a *practical* tendency. The numerous systems of ethics

which have been obtruded with much philosophical parade upon the world, must have attracted the attention of every reflecting mind. Many of these are highly exceptionable, and all of them are extremely defective. The reason is obvious. The theorists, when framing them, have had too much confidence in their own powers. They have paid little regard to the obligations which arise from the divine will; and, though in some cases, they have unintentionally been indebted to the sacred writers, yet the rules and motives of Christianity have not had that prominence in their respective systems, to which they are justly entitled. Often too, the law of God, which the light of nature discovers, has been obscured by vain metaphysical reasonings. The truth is, no proper system of morality can be framed without the aid of Christianity; and those which are merely of human formation must ever partake of the imperfection of the minds which conceived them.

But, too great dependence on human reason not only discovers itself in leading men to fabricate theories of morality for the conduct of life; it likewise evinces its pernicious tendency by leading men to shape their conduct according to those rules of Christianity which appear to themselves most expedient. These sons of reason, cull from among the precepts of the Gospel, and, at one time, condemn those dispositions of heart which it requires to be cultivated; while, at another, they either palliate or exalt as virtuous feelings those dispositions which it reprobates in the strongest language. Humility, they term meanness; forgiveness of injuries, pusillanimity; self-denial, monasticism; zeal for the honour of God and the salvation of men, enthusiasm. The man inflated with pride, they represent as a man of a great mind; he whose eye sparkles with revenge on receiving a small affront, as a man of honour; and the victim of sensuality, as a lover



of freedom:—mark then the importance of intellectual diffidence; of having the dictates of the human mind subjected to the direction of the divine law.

II. We must guard against placing too much dependence on our own minds, when forming a judgment concerning the *divine operations*.

When the votaries of reason observe the events which are constantly taking place in the administration of human affairs, they perceive many appearances of irregularity; and, in many cases, have been led to the dreadful conclusion, that the world is governed by an incontrollable necessity; and that every event originates in the blind collision of casual associations. It must be owned, that in many instances, the operations of Omnipotence are dark and mysterious; and, like the erratic motion of a comet in the heavens, seem to be guided by no determinate agency. God's "way is in the sea, and his path in the deep waters, and his footsteps are not known." Evil, both physical and moral, is allowed to exist in the world; virtue is often "marked out by sorrow for her own," while vice is allowed to triumph; and those schemes which are designed to be of extensive public utility are rendered abortive, while the dark laid plans of mischief are crowned with the success desired. These are doubtless apparent discrepancies, and it is not surprising that the deductions of human reason lead to the impious idea, that "the ways of God are not equal." But, we must be diffident of our own understandings.

When we attempt to form adequate conceptions of the divine nature, we are bewildered in the vast mazes of infinity, and return from our fruitless wanderings without finding a point at which to stop the boundings of our thoughts. The noblest conceptions of which the human mind is capable are annihilated, and the boldest flights of imagination are arrested in their

vain career. We inhabit a globe which is but a speck in the universe; and how can we comprehend a Being who actuates and supports the whole frame of nature? Our faculties are as limited as the sphere of our existence; and how can we comprehend a Being who with one glance beholds the past, the present, and the future? If the *nature* of God be thus incomprehensible to finite creatures, is it not natural to expect that his operations should be equally inexplicable? If our intellectual powers are so incompetent to explain the mode of the divine existence, how dare we presume to pass a verdict on the operations of Omnipotence?

But, supposing that the nature and operations of Deity are in some measure level to the human understanding, yet our views of them are only partial. Our situation on this globe is like that of an insect on the surface of a vast and complicated machine. Even admitting that the insect had intelligence, yet it could only judge of what was within its view; and, as it could not perceive the adjustment of the different parts of the mechanism to their respective ends, it could form no decision concerning the skill of the mechanic. We see only a part of the Almighty's ways, and to decide on the *whole* from the *part* which we behold would be rash and presumptuous. Conduct similar to this, has often been attended with injurious consequences. Let us take one instance from the material universe. For a long period the phenomena of the heavens were wrapt in obscurity. Men judged of them merely from the appearances which they present to the external senses; and, consequently, were led to imagine, that the sun and planetary bodies revolved round this earth as a centre, and that they were only designed to diffuse light and heat over this insignificant globe, which we inhabit. The consequences of these ideas were as bad as the ideas themselves were erroneous. The

untutored peasant looked on the celestial appearances with an unmeaning gaze, whilst those whose minds were enlightened by any scattered rays of astronomical science, regarded them as the productions of an unskilful artificer. Hence, Alphonso X., king of Leon and Castile, a man whose learning was equalled only by his impiety, had the audacity to say, that if God had consulted him at the formation of the world, he would have furnished him with a better plan. Additional light, however, has dispelled every cloud; and the system of the heavens, like every other part of the material universe, is found to bear marks of profound skill and consummate wisdom.—Such was the effect of a rash and inconsiderate judgment concerning the works of God. May not similar effects result from too hasty a decision concerning the moral administration of the universe? The plan of Providence is vast and complicated, and we can see only a *part* of this plan. We seldom see causes and effects conjoined; and, though experience sometimes endows men with a kind of natural vaticination by which they can know the effects which will result from the operation of certain causes; yet, in most cases, the intentions of Deity are wholly unknown to man. To be able to explore final causes, it is absolutely necessary that we have a perfect acquaintance with every purpose to which the objects around us may be applied, together with a clear conception of the ideas of fitness and order which form the prototypes in the mind of that Great Being who directs their motions. Events which occur in the Providence of God frequently give rise to the most unexpected effects. When the Romans appeared on the coasts of this island, the inhabitants anticipated nothing but the cheerless reign of tyranny and oppression; whereas, had they seen all the consequences in one view, they might have hailed it as the era of their emancipation from

the trammels of barbarism. The very means which an English monarch employed to raise the Romish hierarchy on the ruins of the Protestant cause, tended to bring about the very opposite effects. Who, that beheld Joseph sold as a slave, could have once imagined, that ere long he would be lord of all Egypt? Who that beheld the star of Bethlehem emerging from amid clouds and darkness, could have once supposed, that, by means of it, “life and immortality were” to be “brought to light?” The conduct of God towards the Jewish nation, is dark and mysterious; but, as we see not the whole of the divine plan, we must suspend our decision till all be unravelled. At present, we behold kingdoms rising on the ruins of kingdoms; empires that have stood for ages, convulsed, or blotted from the map of existence; and, on all hands, “garments rolled in blood.” Were we to judge from the aspect of the present times, we might conclude that disorder and irregularity pervade the creation of God; but as we see not the issue of these fluctuations, we must admire in silence. The most adverse appearances may be pregnant with the most prosperous events. At any rate, they will tend to the ultimate good of the whole system of things. The thunder which rends the skies, restores the equilibrium of the atmosphere, and expels noxious exhalations. The earthquake, which engulfs millions of immortal beings, prevents eruptions, which would spread devastation over the whole face of nature. Physical evil may issue in moral good, and the furious storms which assail the Christian on the ocean of life, are designed to waft him to the haven of eternal rest.

Behold, then, the importance of *intellectual diffidence*! Though reason, in many cases, communicates a correct and steady light, yet, in as many cases, like the ignis fatuus of the night, it leads aside into quagmires of error. When, therefore,



we undertake any great and arduous work, such as the investigation of moral and religious truth, or the contemplation of the divine operations, we should seek direction from a superior guide; from that Spirit which has been promised to act as "a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths."

G. B. B.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

THE new edition of Milner's works, just published, contains a very interesting addition to the history of the church of Christ, at the close of the fifteenth century, in the account of John de Wesalia, and John Wesselus of Groningen.

The Dean of Carlisle will probably print these and other additions in a separate form, for the purchasers of the former editions. In the mean time, you will gratify such purchasers, and your readers in general, by laying before them these interesting pieces of biography.

J. P.

### SOME ACCOUNT OF JOHN DE WESALIA.

"John de Wesalia was a doctor of divinity of the fifteenth century.

"1. He taught doctrines which much displeased the catholics.

"2. The archbishop of Mentz prosecuted him. John was imprisoned, and an assembly of popish doctors were convened to sit in judgment upon him in 1479.

"3. He made a public recantation of his doctrines; but nevertheless was condemned to a perpetual penance in a monastery of the Augustine friars, where he died soon after.

"The Protestants have certainly ranked him in the catalogue of the witnesses to the truth; but there may be a question, whether his principles and his practice, taken together, entitle him to a place in this history. Very little is known concerning him, except from his examination before the German in-

quisitors, who most undoubtedly treated him with great harshness and severity.

"By one author he appears to have been considered as an eminent Christian; but this is the judgment of a person who shews himself on all occasions extremely attached to Calvinistic tenets, and who has no mercy on Arminians. And if, for the sake of brevity, I may be allowed the use of the words Calvinist and Arminian, as being terms well understood at this day, John de Wesalia was certainly a most rigid Calvinist.

"A long catalogue of charges were brought against him, from which it may be proper to select a few for the reader's perusal.

"1. From everlasting, God hath written a book wherein he hath inscribed all his elect; and whosoever is not already written there, will never be written there at all. Moreover,

"2. He that is written therein, will never be blotted out.

"3. The elect are saved by the grace of God alone; and what man soever God willeth to save, by enduing him with grace, if all the priests in the world were desirous to damn and excommunicate that man, he would still be saved. Whomsoever likewise God willeth to damn, he would still be damned, though the presbyters, the pope and others were willing to save him.

"4. If there had never been any pope in the world, they who are saved, would have been saved. The pope, and bishops and priests contribute nothing to salvation: con-

cord alone, and peace among men, and a peaceable way of living, are sufficient.

"5. Christ never appointed any particular fasts, nor forbad the use of flesh meat on any day.

"6. If St. Peter appointed fasts, perhaps he did so for the purpose of having a better sale for his fish.

"7. The holy oil is the very same as the oil which you eat at home.

"8. The Scriptures do not say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son.

"9. Those who undertake pilgrimages to Rome, are fools.

"10. I consider nothing as sinful, which the Scriptures have not declared to be so.

"11. I despise the pope and his councils. I love Christ; and may his word dwell in us abundantly!

"12. It is a difficult thing to be a Christian.

"13. Indulgences are nothing.

"It was further objected to him, in the course of his examination, that he had given it as his opinion, that St. Paul contributed nothing towards his conversion by his own free-will.

"This account might lead us to suspect, that there was something of a spirit of levity in the disposition of John de Wesalia. He seems to have seen clearly through several of the popish superstitions, and to have exposed them with zeal and freedom. Charity will certainly incline us to hope the best; nevertheless the Christian reader cannot but wish there had been greater marks of personal contrition of soul and of true humility at the cross of Christ. However, it ought not to be omitted, that John was an old man, and bowed down with infirmities and disorders of long standing; and therefore he was probably not able to recollect what he had formerly advanced, or to express his thoughts distinctly before such a formidable tribunal of inquisitors. Fear compelled him at last to retract; but in the course of his trial, he had the

spirit to say to the court, "If Christ were now present, and ye were to treat him as ye do me, he might be condemned by you as a heretic. However," the old man added with a smile, "he would get the better of you by his acuteness."

#### SOME ACCOUNT OF JOHN WESSELUS, OF GRONINGEN.

"John Wesselus of Groningen has sometimes been taken for the same person as the preceding John de Wesalia. And no wonder; for besides the similarity of their names, they lived about the same time, and both of them opposed several of the errors and corruptions of popery.

"Wesselus, however, is incomparably the superior character in every respect. He was one of the most learned men of the fifteenth century, and was so celebrated for his talents and attainments, as to have been denominated 'the light of the world.'

"He was born about the year 1419, not in 1400 as some have supposed. He died in 1489.

"Whatever doubts may be entertained respecting the genuine seriousness and solidity of John de Wesalia, the extraordinary religious knowledge of Wesselus, and his truly Christian spirit, are indisputable. He has been justly called the forerunner of Luther.

"That great reformer was so astonished when he first met with some pieces of the composition of Wesselus, that in the Leipsic edition of 1522, he wrote a preface to the work, in which he says, 'By the wonderful providence of God, I have been compelled to become a public man, and to fight battles with those monsters of indulgences and papal decrees. All along I supposed myself to stand alone; yet have I preserved so much animation in the contest, as to be every where accused of heat and violence, and of biting too hard. However, the truth is, I have earnestly wished to have done with these followers of Baal among whom my lot is cast, and to



live quietly in some corner; for I have utterly despaired of making any impression on these brazen foreheads and iron necks of impiety.

“ ‘But behold, in this state of mind, I am told that even in these days, there is in secret a remnant of the people of God. Nay, I am not only told so, but I rejoice to see a proof of it. Here is a new publication by Wesselus of Groningen, a man of an admirable genius, and of an uncommonly enlarged mind. It is very plain he was taught of God, as Isaiah prophesied that Christians should be: and as in my own case, so with him, it cannot be supposed that he received his doctrines from men. If I had read his works before, my enemies might have supposed that I had learnt every thing from Wesselus, such a perfect coincidence there is in our opinions. As to myself, I not only derive pleasure, but strength and courage from this publication. It is now impossible for me to doubt whether I am right in the points which I have inculcated, when I see so entire an agreement in sentiment, and almost the same words used by this eminent person, who lived in a different age, in a distant country, and in circumstances very unlike my own. I am surprised that this excellent Christian writer should be so little known. The reason may be, either that he lived without blood and contention (for this is the only thing in which he differs from me); or perhaps the Jews of our times have suppressed his writings as heretical.

“ ‘I recommend it therefore to the pious reader, to peruse this book with care and consideration. The writer peculiarly excels in judgment; and moreover he is admirably calculated to improve the judgment of his reader. Lastly, those who are displeased with my asperity, will meet with nothing of that sort, in Wesselus, to offend them.’

“ A complete edition of the works

of Wesselus was published in 1614, with a short account of his life, by Albert Hardenberg. The book is in quarto, and contains above nine hundred pages, and is extremely scarce.

“ It is only a small part of his writings, to which Luther’s address to the reader is prefixed; but the subjects are very important. For example: 1. On the kind providence of God. 2. On the causes, the mysteries, and the effects of our Lord’s incarnation, and sufferings. 3. On the nature of ecclesiastical power; and the degree of that obligation which men are under to obey the rules of the church. 4. On the sacrament of repentance, and the keys of the church. 5. On the true communion of saints. 6. On purgatory, and on indulgences.

“ If the treatises of Wesselus had fallen in the way of the author of this history, the editor is persuaded he would have been both delighted and surprised to find that so much Christian light and wisdom existed in the middle of the fifteenth century; and would probably have given much larger extracts from this eminent divine, than can now be conveniently introduced into the fourth volume. It is true that his writings are considerably tarnished with popish errors and superstitions; but still the wonder is, that of these blemishes there are not many more and much greater. In general, he appears to have seen quite as far as Luther saw, about the years 1518 and 1519. In regard to purgatory, his notion seems to have been, that it was a place of purification, but not of punishment.

“ I know not whether Luther ever saw the more elaborate writings of this truly great man. They are extremely practical, and very sound.

“ 1. There are eleven chapters, taking up 184 pages, on the nature and management of prayer. Here the writer follows the order of the clauses in the Lord’s prayer; and explains them with a simplicity and copiousness of language, and an ori-

ginality of thought, that has rarely been exceeded in any age.

"2. The second treatise, which is somewhat longer, is grave and useful throughout. The author calls it, *Rules for Meditation, or Directions for fixing the mind in its contemplations, and for restraining irregular thoughts.* From the case of Mary and Martha, he takes occasion, in the first part, to make a comparison between busy and quiet scenes, between an active and a contemplative life. The rules laid down in the rest of this performance, though they savour a little of the taste of the times, in being formal and artificial, display nevertheless both great powers of intellect and an extensive erudition. Every line breathes a spirit of piety and devotion. But the depth of the writer's religious thoughts and the warmth of his spiritual affections are most evident in the examples, which he subjoins, with a view to illustrate his rules for meditation: and these he takes good care to support by appropriate quotations from Scripture.

"3. But the work of Wesselus, which is most solid and important, and which seems to have called forth the greatest exercises both of his head and his heart, is, an inquiry into the reasons of the humiliation of Christ in his incarnation and bitter pains.—This subject is briefly touched upon in the aforementioned small miscellaneous publication of 1522; but in the edition of 1614 it is again handled with uncommon ability, and to the comprehensive extent of twenty chapters on the incarnation, and fourscore chapters on the greatness and the severity of our Lord's sufferings.

"It is not possible to communicate a clear idea of the author's manner of treating these mysterious and fundamental points of religion, without transcribing a large part of his compositions. Suffice it to say, that he is in general so perfectly orthodox, and has so clear an insight into the essential doctrines of

Christianity, that it would not be easy to point out any material difference between Wesselus and the church of England, in most articles of the greatest consequence. The fall of man, repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, justification by faith only, and sanctification by the Spirit, are the revealed truths, which are constantly before his eyes. And it may seem not a little remarkable, that he should have understood perfectly how to reconcile the apparent contradictions between St. Paul and St. James, in the matter of justification. "There is not," says he, "the smallest disagreement between these apostles. They concur in one common sentiment, That the just shall live by a faith which worketh by love. Is it not by works that our natural body is proved to be alive? If there be no signs of pulse, no respiration, no warmth about the præcordia, in short, if there be no vital actions whatever, do we not pronounce the body to be dead? These actions are the proper proof that it is alive; yet they are not the cause of its life. The soul, which is the source of these actions, is the cause of life: further, the more in number, vigour, and excellence these actions are, the more thoroughly we say that body is alive. So in spiritual things. The love of Christ is the noblest and most excellent of the intellectual affections; and, in this our mortal course, it is the strongest proof of life in the soul of the Christian. Moreover, love may exist even though the person sits still; does nothing; meddles not with external matters, as Martha did; but sees and tastes how sweet the Lord's is, as Mary saw and tasted when she obtained the part that was not to be taken from her. But mark, there must be a principle of love, otherwise the actions of the lover will not be accepted. Faith is that principle; and hence it is that faith is accepted on account of its productive nature. Now, where there is no operation of this sort,



St. James pronounces the faith to be dead: and St. Paul in no wise opposes that sentiment, when he says that a man is justified by the faith of Christ without works. However, this is not to be understood as though the faith of a true believer produced the righteousness of an angel; no: the man is justified for this reason, because it has pleased God to bestow on the believer a righteousness superior to that of an angel, namely, the satisfaction of Christ, the great High Priest. Hence also, no religious exercise contributes more to a true justification, than frequent meditation on our Lord's passion, with a commemoration of the same. It is an exercise of faith, in which the believer's object is to become partaker of the benefits of Christ's sacrifice; and in that spirit, he confesses his sins, longs for deliverance, wishes, waits, sits at the feet of Jesus, and, like Mary, chooses the better part: such a faith, the more vigorous it is in believing, commemorating, tasting, hungering and thirsting; and the more ardent it is in producing spiritual breathings and desires, the more completely will it apply to the conscience the blood of the High Priest, and thereby justify the sinner.—And here, may we not be allowed to ask, whether the man who thus believes, desires, wishes, and prays, can properly be said to produce no works?

“But we must not dissemble that sometimes, among very fine and beautiful sentiments, the exuberant imagination of this venerable divine leads him to advance positions, which, if not absolutely contrary to Scripture, are neither warranted by it, nor capable of being proved by reason. An instance of this sort may be found, I think, in his seventh chapter, on the reasons of the incarnation of our Lord. He there maintains, that the Word, the second person of the Trinity, would have taken upon him our nature, even though man had not sinned. But it will be unnecessary to take up the reader's time with the subtle,

abstruse, inconclusive arguments, which he makes use of on this occasion.”

“To some persons it may seem extraordinary, that a man, whose life was so uniformly and so eminently christian, should have been harassed in his last illness with doubts concerning the truth of revealed religion. The friend to whom he owned the uneasiness and perplexity of his mind, was prodigiously surprised, and exhorted Wesselus to direct all his thoughts to Christ the only Saviour. This admonition did not seem to please him at the moment; and his friend retired, deeply afflicted. A short time after, the same friend returned, and Wesselus, with all the joy and satisfaction that could be expressed by one in his weak condition, cried out, “God be praised! all those vain doubtings are fled; and now all I know, is Jesus Christ and him crucified.”—He then resigned his soul to God.

“Two reasons may be given, why Wesselus was not crushed in that storm of persecution which in the year 1479 broke out upon his friend and contemporary John de Wesalia:

“1. David of Burgundy, then bishop of Utrecht, is said to have loved and protected him.

“2. His reputation both for learning and piety was at a great height.

“Pope Sixtus IV. immediately after his inauguration at Rome, told Wesselus that he would grant him any request he should make. Wesselus answered thus: Holy father and kind patron, I shall not press hard upon your holiness. You well know I never aimed at great things. But as you now sustain the character of the supreme pontiff and shepherd on earth, my request is, that you would so discharge the duties of your elevated station, that your praise may correspond with your dignity, and that when the Great Shepherd shall appear, whose first minister you are, he may say, Well done, good and faithful servant, en-

ter into the joy of thy Lord: and moreover, that you may be able to say boldly, Lord, thou gavest me five talents, behold I have gained five other talents.

"The pope replied, That must be my care: But do you ask something for yourself. Then, rejoined Wesselus, I beg you to give me out of the Vatican library a Greek and a Hebrew Bible. You shall have them, said Sixtus: But, foolish man, why don't you ask for a bishopric, or something of that sort? For the best of reasons, said Wesselus, because I do not want such things.

"The pious student cannot fail to be interested in this account of a very eminent Christian, so very little known."

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*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

AMONG the MSS. brought by the Rev. Dr. Buchanan from India are two MS. copies of the New Testament in Hebrew: one containing the whole of the New Testament, excepting the Revelation of St. John; another having the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistle to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, and Ephesians, in large quarto. This last has the book wanting in the former; so that the entire text of the New Testament in Hebrew is furnished by this oriental collection. It is a circumstance which will no doubt promote the views and interests of the societies formed for spreading the knowledge of Christianity among the Jews, that at the very time when such great and laudable exertions are making towards the conversion of this people, the means and instruments of advancing the work should be daily coming forward, as if moved by the secret hand of Providence to concur in bringing into the fold of the Christian church the long-lost sheep of the house of Israel!

The want of an accurate Hebrew translation of the New Testament has been hitherto much deplored, not only in England, but in other countries of Christendom where at-

tempts to convert the Jews have at different times been made. It is taken for granted, therefore, that such a work, whenever it shall be effected, will be regarded as a most essential preparatory measure. The Romish church never put the New Testament into the hands of their proselytes in the sacred tongue; and their attempts in regard of the Jews were, perhaps on this account, without success, not only in Europe, but in Asia.

There are already extant in print some Hebrew translations of the whole and of parts of the New Testament; but they are much too incorrect and imperfect to convey to the Jews an accurate knowledge of the Christian Scriptures. It is therefore important that we should avail ourselves of every new resource, whereby we may be enabled to produce a translation more just and acceptable.

The manuscripts mentioned above, as forming a part of the Buchanan collection, were obtained from the Black Jews, and were found deposited in the chest of one of their synagogues at Cochin: that containing all the books except one of the New Testament, is written in the Jerusalem hand, and a transcript of it is now making from the original into the square or sacred character, at Dr. Buchanan's expense. The text has already been sufficiently examined to ascertain that it is an oriental translation, wholly independent of, and distinct from, those Hebrew versions which are known in Europe. It has numerous Syraisms, which declare that the translator had at least some assistance from the Syriac text, and some Rabbinical words and constructions; which shew how very arduous a work it is to produce an exact Hebrew translation. The dialect of the Old Testament, the Syriac text of the New Testament, and the Rabbinical language, appear to have rendered their combined assistance on this occasion. The chapters and verses are numbered after the European manner. The quotations



from the Old Testament do not literally follow the Hebrew; but are translations from the Greek, the Syriac, or whatever other copy this version was made from;—a point which at present it is difficult to ascertain. This manuscript has some peculiar readings; and, whatever their authority may be, they at least shew in what manner the Eastern Jews have understood particular texts of Scripture.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

T. Y.

Cambridge, July 1, 1810.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

ADMITTING, as I most readily do, the arguments adduced by your correspondents S. H. and W. H., against the custom of saying "Not at home," though actually at home; permit me to call your attention to a grievance, which has in part produced the evil complained of, and which certainly demands both consideration and redress.

There are too many persons, who, freed from the obligation of labouring for their daily bread, make no other use of their leisure but to consume that of others. Perfectly insensible to the value of the commodity, of which they so wantonly deprive their neighbours, they go from house to house, and plunder every body, whom they find at home, of what many value more than they do their money. Now, sir, I beg to inquire, what are the bars and bolts we may oppose against such thieves? Is there no method of civilly giving them to understand, that we are desirous of making *some use* of the few hours which the necessary engagements of life leave us to call our own? Or must we hire a lodging, if we wish to have a morning to ourselves; and quit our more convenient dwelling, because otherwise *we must be at home* to every visitor?

I assure you, sir, this is a matter of real importance; and I have long wondered that the more considerate part of society have not adopted

some regulation which would at once protect the interests of truth and of time. We have, as a nation, been too prone to adopt foreign fashions;—in the present instance, however, there is one which might perhaps be adopted with advantage. On the continent, morning visits are never made, because their mornings are necessarily short, as they dine early; but this leaves the afternoons open to that kind of short visits which we make in the forenoon. Many years ago I resided for some time in the neighbourhood of France. Our servant after dinner regularly made this inquiry, "*Les dames, sont-elles visibles aujourd'hui?*" meaning, did we choose to see company? According to our reply he gave the answer to every comer, who perfectly understood by "*Madame n'est pas visible,*" that we chose to be alone: and was I a servant, I should make no scruple, if ordered to say my master or mistress was not at home when they really were so, to alter the phrase, and say, *they did not see company that day*; which might satisfy any one who had no real business; and those who have, ought to be admitted. I knew a servant who told his master he *could not* tell his visitors he was out when he was at home. His master, who valued him, knowing he acted upon principle, replied, "Say what you will, only keep people out when I do not wish to let them in." He did so, and succeeded in pleasing his master and affronting nobody.

I hope, sir, my remonstrance will not lie on the table of your numerous correspondents, unnoticed and unanswered. But it will not be sufficient to talk, or even to write, about it, unless some efficient measures are entered into by persons of some influence, who will unite to give the tone to others. It ought to be considered, that those who really feel the force of the arguments used by your correspondents against the practice of falsely saying they are *not at home*, are the very persons who secretly sigh over the hours

wasted by an indiscriminate admission. Is there, then, no alternative between the guilt of mispending time, and that of telling an untruth, which, though in many cases it is more verbal than real, yet, I allow, is not the proper method of securing either the repose of leisure or the improvement of time?

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

SOPHRONIA.

June 20, 1810.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

THE Christian Observer being, I apprehend, not unfavourable to candid discussion, and therefore disposed occasionally to allow a hearing on both sides of a question, no apology, I trust, is necessary for offering a few remarks, should you think them worthy of insertion, upon two papers in your number for May respecting the custom of saying "Not at home." In order to form an impartial judgment whether the use of these words be inconsistent with truth, or have a tendency to generate a disregard to it; not merely their literal sense, but that in which they are generally received, as well as the principle on which their adoption is founded, must be adverted to. This is a consideration too obvious to have required my noticing, did it not appear to be somewhat too hastily dismissed, if not quite overlooked, by both your correspondents. Two ladies, let it be supposed, are desirous of keeping up their mutual acquaintance; neither of them, however, possessing the inclination, possibly not time or opportunity, for cultivating it further by frequent interviews; their intentions, if translated into language, would be to this effect:—"We will call upon one another once or twice in the year. I may very likely be at home when my servant denies me to you: you, of course, are at liberty to give the same order when I return your visit. We agree, then, neither to be surprised or offended whenever this may happen; and on these terms, which will authorize our

speaking whenever we meet, at the houses of mutual acquaintance or any where else, we will, if you please, continue just as good friends as we are at present." That an understanding, a *previous contract*, if it may be so termed, of this kind, does subsist, not only between the comparatively few of both sexes who form what is called the fashionable world, but between the majority of those whose visits are not confined to their own immediate connexions—all, in short, who are in the habit of exchanging morning visits in London—will not, I think, be denied by any who are at all conversant with its manners. There may, indeed, be more or less formality, a greater or less proportion of denials may occur, in the performance of these acts of civility, according to the rank of life or extent of acquaintance possessed by the respective parties: but the principle appears the same, though there may be some variation in the practice. Now if this be admitted as a fair statement of the case, the objection urged against the phrase in question, on account of its deceit, must, at least in the degree in which that statement is approved, lose its weight; for those words cannot be called deceitful by which, generally speaking, no one is deceived; and which, though liable to be misconstrued by a stranger, are perfectly understood by those most conversant with their use. One of your correspondents seems willing to rest the question upon this issue; would a lady, he asks, like to stand at her window while her servant denies her? He allows, that if she could with sincerity answer in the affirmative, then "not at home" are indeed words of course, and therefore unobjectionable. Now I believe that most ladies (I may venture to affirm that I know some) would be able without prevarication to answer thus; "I would not certainly stand at my window, looking full in my acquaintance, Mrs. B.'s face, while my servant denies me, because she being thus



aware that I saw her, would consider this denial, instead of being generally exclusive, to be directed against her in particular; but I should not have any objection to her knowing that I was at home. If, for instance, I had happened, while her carriage was stopping at my door, to have been standing with my back to the window, or from any other circumstance had reason to believe she had seen me, I should not on this account think myself obliged to admit her; and the next time we met, it would be without any confusion on my part, or offence on hers. My reason, then, for not occupying so conspicuous a post would be principally this: not from the fear lest I should be known to be at home, but lest I should appear to refuse admittance in consequence of a previous inspection of my visitor." To shew that I have not selected a very impudent or a very fashionable female to make this answer, I would appeal to the experience of any of your readers, who have chanced to call upon a lady during the time that her carriage was standing before her door, and who, therefore, had good reason to presume that she was not from home: have they, upon experiencing a denial, felt authorized from this presumption to repeat their inquiries, and to persist in requiring admittance? Have they not, perhaps, during this interval, been witnesses of the successive visits and denials of others at the same door? Now, Mr. Editor, it strikes me that this lady's fearless retention of her carriage under her windows, taken in conjunction with this unobtrusive behaviour of her visitors on such an occasion, is, with the limitation I have above proposed, much the same with her standing all this time at her window; it is the same, I mean, with respect to any deception designed on her part, or sustained on theirs. Your correspondent S. H. represents a cross-examination of the servant, and consequently a repetition of the denial by him, as a circumstance frequently occurring; and thence takes

occasion to shew how powerfully such a custom must operate in rendering him callous to the distinctions between truth and falsehood on other occasions. Here I think S. H. is mistaken in point of fact. I believe such a question as this, "But is not your master *really* at home?" to be *very unusual* in the course of morning visiting. It may indeed be asked by an intimate friend, who is in the habit of being always admitted, supposing him not to be personally known to the servant; but in this case, the denial will of course not be persisted in. I am at a loss therefore to conceive what description of visitors would attempt this forcible mode of entry, except those who are unacquainted with the meaning of the common form of exclusion, or those who disregard it, from their presuming upon a greater degree of intimacy than they actually possess.

With respect to the remaining classes of visitors, the sound of "Not at home" is in general too satisfactory to prompt them to further researches after truth; and they depart well pleased to have fulfilled the duties of the morning by means of their paper representatives.

Among those families, who, being inhabitants of the country, make only occasional visits to the metropolis, there are some, who, upon conscientious principles not availing themselves of the common form of denial, allow all that call upon them to be admitted. Their own stay being very limited, they do not find any great, or overbearing, inconvenience resulting from this practice. The case, however, is by no means the same with those who, on the like grounds disapproving of the custom in question, reside there the greater part of the year. Such persons, especially if, owing to their rank in life or other causes, their circle of acquaintance be extensive, find themselves under the necessity of adopting a practice somewhat different: when, unwilling to be subject to intrusion, they direct their servants to say they are "engaged."

Now, besides that this term, from its singularity, must be frequently unintelligible, I doubt whether, upon strict examination, it will be found to contain more truth than the common phrase. If the latter be objected to because it *may* dismiss the visitor under a false impression—thinking that you are from home, when you are not—the former also may, and very often must, mislead him as to truth:—the lady of the house may chance, when the rap is heard at her door, to be drawing a pattern, and the gentleman reading the newspaper; or if they be early folks, they may, according to the modern hours of morning visiting, be both sitting after dinner, doing nothing.—But it is far from my intention, though of opinion this term is not without its faults, to blame, or wish it abolished: on the contrary, I never hear it but with a desire of being better reconciled to its use;—a prejudice in its favour, which I can attribute only to its being adopted by some whom I have reason to believe are uniformly *engaged* in the best pursuits, the service of their Maker and their fellow-creatures. My principal reason for noticing it was to shew, that some obstacle to admission seems necessary; and that to be visible to all comers, is a system not generally practicable.

With respect to the practical effects on the minds of servants, which your correspondent considers as almost necessarily produced by a compliance with this custom, I much doubt whether they exist, at least in the degree which he would intimate. As far as I have been enabled to judge from my own experience, or by means of that of others, I have not found that the servants of those houses where it prevails have in general paid less regard to truth on other occasions, or been less actuated by a spirit of integrity in the discharge of duty, than those who, with about the same portion of religious instruction, have, from their residence in the country, been always strangers to its adoption.

Should any of your readers have had patience to follow me thus far, by some of them, I fear, these remarks will be viewed with a jealous eye, as appearing to come from one who is determined at all hazards to justify the practice in question; or, at least, is more solicitous to do so than to promote the interests of truth and Christian simplicity. I beg, therefore, to be heard a little further, when, I trust, we shall be found to agree better on the subject before us, than they may at present expect.—It has hitherto been my aim to shew, not that the words under consideration are, in all the ways in which they *may* be used, unobjectionable; but that, in the general way, they are not fairly chargeable with upholding a system of deception, or with a tendency to produce a spirit of deception in the minds of those most habituated to them.—I have intimated that they *may* be used in an unjustifiable way. They certainly are so when intended merely to deceive; which is the case when they are *persisted* in. They then, and not till then, in my opinion, become lying words; and I heartily concur with H. S. in his condemnation of them. The very repetition of inquiry by the visitor, I conceive to constitute his right to have the truth told him: he has, in so doing, virtually dissolved the "previous contract" on his part, and he has a right to expect the same conduct on mine. Perhaps he never was a member of it; but this rather increases than detracts from his claim to the truth. He must then be admitted, though I may be certain of thereby incurring all those protracted sufferings which an obstinate sinner has it in his power to inflict. "Not at home," therefore, while addressed only to those who, from not repeating their inquiry, may be fairly presumed not to be desirous of ascertaining the truth, or who are perfectly satisfied to think the master or mistress of the house from home whenever they choose to be so considered (a disposition which, as I have ob-



served before, most morning visitors possess), are surely words of course, though by no means without their use in maintaining an intercourse with society. The servant who is confined to this use of them, will be enabled to see what a compliance with custom allows, and what an ad-

herence to truth demands. He can never be exposed to that ordeal, described by S. H. as so painful to a conscientious mind; that state of perplexity, between the desire of obeying his master on earth, and the fear of displeasing his Master who is in heaven.

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## REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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*An Inquiry into the secondary Causes which Mr. Gibbon has assigned for the rapid Growth of Christianity.* By the Hon. Sir DAVID DALRYMPLE, Bart., (Lord Hailes) one of the Judges of the Courts of Session and Justiciary in Scotland. The second Edition. *To which is prefixed a brief Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Author.* Johnstone, Edinburgh; Hatchard, &c. London. 1808. 12mo. pp. 338. Price 4s.

THE notices which we have already taken of Mr. Gibbon's attack upon Christianity, would render it unnecessary to recur to the subject, did we not feel a reluctance to permit so able a work as the present to pass without our recommendation, and the assistance which that recommendation may give to its circulation. Not that we think several other works with the same object, much less the conclusive and serious one of the late Mr. Milner, deficient: but the work of Lord Hailes having a character of its own, and his authority possessing peculiar influence in a certain circle, we conceive it to be entitled to distinct notice and applause. Neither can we dissemble our satisfaction, that while the public will read a popular history, and, with it, the impieties wrought into and infecting its composition, a concomitant demand is made for the antidote.

Mr. Gibbon, in his own Life, has

noticed the present Inquiry in the following terms: "The profession and rank of Sir David Dalrymple has given a more decent colour to his style. But he scrutinized each separate passage of the two chapters with the dry minuteness of a special pleader; and, as he was always solicitous to make, he may sometimes have succeeded in finding a flaw." This, with the necessary and easy commentary by which the text of Mr. Gibbon is generally to be interpreted, in order to make truth of it, is no incorrect character of the production meant to be condemned. The minute diligence with which Lord Hailes has followed the anti-christian through all his positions and insinuations, must have been peculiarly troublesome to Mr. Gibbon; and we perfectly agree with this gentleman, that whatever his opponent were solicitous to make, he has *sometimes* found a flaw. Not a page, hardly a sentence, of the notorious chapters occurs, which does not bear ample testimony to the correctness of the historian's admission; and we must concede to him, on this occasion, the distinguished praise, which has been bestowed on Dr. Lardner, of not *over-stating* a point of evidence. Mr. Gibbon is entitled to the highest credit for moderation, when he barely affirms it possible that his opponent may sometimes have found a flaw.

In p. 212 Lord Hailes has this observation. "Let it be remarked

in general, that the chief circumstances mentioned in the miscellany seem to have had a natural tendency to retard, instead of accelerating the triumphs of Christianity over the passions, prejudices, and opinions of mankind." Our readers may recollect a continued argument on this very principle in a paper in our first volume, pp. 641, &c., entitled, "Causes of a supposed Extinction of Christianity under Diocletian."

Hardly any part of the present work will be found more curious and entertaining than the detailed parallel of the intolerance of the primitive Christians, and of Seneca in particular, respecting the luxuries of life. Mr. Gibbon was perfectly in his element, when laying out and ridiculing the censures passed, and supposed to be passed, on what he assumed to be the innocent indulgences of life, by the Christians of the first ages. And Lord Hailes has not been with less effect in his, when, not only detecting many inaccuracies of the zealous unbeliever, but pointing out the much more extravagant censures denounced against those indulgences by the heathen philosopher Seneca. This detail reaches from p. 236 to p. 264. From the last we quote the author's inference:

"My labour in instituting this comparison between the extravagant fancies of Seneca and those ascribed to some of the primitive writers, will have been ill bestowed, should my readers imagine that I mean to vindicate any errors in the primitive writers, by pointing out similar errors in an eminent heathen philosopher.

Mr. Gibbon had full liberty to select, from all the primitive writers, whatever tended to expose them to ridicule; and yet, even with the aid of the mistakes and exaggerations of Barbeyrac, he has not been able to produce, from their works, any instances of injudicious and trifling censures on the luxuries and conveniences of life, which are not to be equalled, if not exceeded, by the passionate declamations of Seneca on the like topics.

"But further, it was in the schools of heathen philosophy that the Christian writers learnt to declaim in that style which Mr.

Gibbon ascribes to 'pious indignation.' Let us be consistent, and not blame the scholars, while we extol the masters whom they chose to imitate."

Nothing, we are persuaded, but a parade of learning chiefly derived from *secondary* sources, a certain glare of style, and a real viciousness of intention, operating on the ignorance and licentiousness of the generality of readers, could give to the paltry argumentation (if argumentation it can be called), of Mr. Gibbon's attack, any effect, or entitle it to any attention.

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*Fifty-two Sermons on the Baptismal Covenant, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, and other important Subjects of practical Religion, being one for each Sunday in the Year.*  
By SAMUEL WALKER, A.B., late of Exeter College, Oxford; Curate of Truro. Corrected and revised by the Rev. S. Burder, M.A. of Clare-hall, Cambridge. London: Matthews and Leigh. 1810. 2 vols. 8vo. Price 16s.

We are happy to have an opportunity of introducing these truly excellent sermons to the knowledge of such of our readers as may yet be unacquainted with them; and of recommending them to a place in every domestic library. Being the republication of a work which has been already extensively circulated, it will not be expected that we should enter into any detailed analysis of its contents, or any minute criticisms of its style. Suffice it to say, that it is a truly evangelical performance; sound and scriptural in its doctrines, and eminently practical in its tendency; and that although the style be generally rough and unpolished, and sometimes even uncouth, yet the sterling, intrinsic merit of these sermons is such, that this defect is soon forgotten in the strong personal interest which they excite. That supremely important question; Am I or am I not a Christian; Am I a child of God, or an heir of wrath; Am I advancing



towards heaven; or am I on the downward road to destruction? is reiterated so frequently and so pointedly; and the criteria by which this question may be decided are so plainly and intelligibly indicated in these volumes that it is impossible for any one to read them with attention, and yet remain wholly under the power of that self-delusion by which so many in the present day are prevented from rightly estimating their character in the sight of God. As models for pulpit-composition, we certainly cannot recommend them, without considerable qualifications; yet, for the purposes of domestic instruction and individual examination and improvement, they are invaluable. We will give, as one proof of this, what Mr. Walker has said on the subject of approaching the table of the Lord.

"If the design," he observes, "of this institution be to seal Christ to believers as an all-sufficient Saviour, and them to Christ as loyal servants and faithful disciples and believers, one to another as fellow-members and fellow-servants; if such be the communion of saints with Christ and one another, by a solemn institution of our Lord's own appointment for the purpose, it will be reasonable to ask, in view to the approaching ordinance, and I leave you to make application for the time past,

"1st.—Are you *sincere* herein? That is to say, are you truly desirous that Christ alone be your Saviour, because you find an utter insufficiency in yourself, and an all-sufficiency in him to help you in every need of your soul, whether respecting your guilt, or the sentence of the law, or the power of corruption, or the force of temptation, or the deceitfulness of your own heart, or the vigilance and artifice of the devil, or the work you have to do, or the shortness of your life, or the approach of death and judgment: for any or all of these things do you desire sincerely help from Christ, giving glory to him as alone able, and mightily able, to save you; and saying with Peter, 'Lord, to whom should I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life? And I know and am sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Also are you sincere in this, in determining that Christ alone shall be your Master? Doth he who knoweth all things, even the secrets of your heart, read there

the unfeigned characters of loyalty for his service, and zeal for his honour and interests? That, loathing, and exceedingly ashamed of yourself for your past unfaithfulness, you are come now to him with an honest and true heart, earnestly hoping, and steadfastly purposing by his grace, that never more you will be ashamed of him, or deny him, or betray him, or sell him for interest, or reputation, or friends, or life?—Can you say also with truth, from the bottom of your heart, that you are ready to all offices of love towards Christ's members and your fellow-members? Can you cheerfully eat this one bread and drink of the same cup in token of your brotherly affection; and as your pledge that you will gladly do all in your power to promote their greatest interests; and that you are ready to receive all their kind assistance for the edification of your own soul?

"2dly.—To sincerity have you added diligence in this matter? Are you come prepared? Have you examined and judged yourself that you might not be judged of the Lord? Is Christ precious to your soul? Do you long to taste of his goodness? Are you come with an hungering appetite to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man; diligently having sought out your wants and his fulness? Is your desire keen after his pardoning, quickening, and comforting grace? Have you been diligent too in trying your ways, in lamenting your iniquities before him whom you have pierced; in stirring up all your graces, and putting on the wedding garment? Have you beheld the man till you have mourned, till you have believed, till you have loved him? Have you thought of all the wonders he hath done, of all the wonders he hath done for you, how he hath plucked you from the hands of the enemy, and led you, and taught you to go, and kept you from falling, and lifted you up when you were down, and to this day with almighty power and care delivered you? Of the wonders he hath yet to do for you have you been mindful—wonders in grace and glory? Have you meditated on all his kindness, till your heart, big with praise and thankfulness, is impatient to come before him in this not the least testimony of his love; to come and tell him of his wondrous doings, and to devote yourself, your whole self, soul, body, and spirit, to him, as a too-little return for his wonderful love? And would you think it worse than death ever any more to part from him, to deny or disgrace him? But more, have you been diligent that your love of Christ might be enlarged to all his people? Have you been earnestly seeking that all prejudices might

be done away, and to have your heart taught the gracious tenderness of a Christ-like affection, so that you can say, 'You love not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth,' and trust that Christ shall own you by this mark to be his disciple?

"3dly.—Are you come also in faith? Have you considered attentively who hath spread the table, and what are the provisions which are set before you? Do you see Christ under these signs of bread and wine; and are you come to feed your heart and eyes in this representation of the dying love of Jesus? You have weighed his own words, 'This is my body which was given for you, and this is my blood of the New Testament which was shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins.' And what, do you verily believe, it shall be even so as he hath said? Only believe and the thing is done. Faith discovers a crucified Jesus in the representation here made of him; faith makes the promise a living word, and feeds on the body and blood of Christ in the power of the promise; faith looks to Jesus at the right hand of God, is assured of his power to fulfil his engagements, and of his faithfulness to his promises, and draws out of him a feast indeed, to the establishment and refreshing of the soul. Are you believing, therefore? In spite of all your manifold past iniquities, in spite of all your infirmities and spiritual poverty, in spite of whatever trials and discouraging appearances, do you believe that there shall be an accomplishment of the things which have been spoken? This is to deal with Christ as a faithful and powerful High-Priest, and to enter into the heart of his design in leaving behind him this pledge of his love, this assurance of his care and protection, till he come. Yet,

"4thly.—Are you come with *reverence*? Amidst all the triumphs of your faith, are you mindful who you are and with whom you are to transact? That you yourself are a vile sinner, coming to sit down at your Master's table, who is also the most high God? The thought indeed ought not to terrify you, but it ought to awe you. Have you therefore been so mindful of your sins, and so abased in your own eyes, that you could not think of drawing near but in the merit of your Lord, and upon his express invitation and command? And, when even thus you are emboldened to approach, are you impressed with a deep sense of your vileness, of your unworthiness of so high an honour, and covered with shame while you are admitted to so near an approach? Believe it, my friends, the highest archangels

rejoice to minister under him with whom you are about to feast. You must needs then be humble when you come near to his Majesty; you must needs admire and adore, and be full of lowly reverence of his presence, while he thus condescends to us sinful dust and ashes.

"The thoughts I have now suggested to you may well add to your godly fear and reverence; while you cannot but have reflected how far short you have come in all these things, or at least in fulfilling your sacramental engagements on former occasions. Who can say, with all this sincerity, and diligence, and faith, and reverence, I have always attended on the Lord at his table? Let the thought of former miscarriages still more humble and abase you; let it also increase your fear and watchfulness. And O that others, who have neglected or profaned this high and holy ordinance, may be seasonably brought to a sense of their guilt with regard to this important branch of Christian worship!" Vol. ii. p. 51—56.

Another extract, and we have done. It is taken from a sermon on the character of Agrippa.

"A man may be so convinced that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, and that there is somewhat so excellent in the ways of godliness beyond those of sin, as to be seriously wishing oftentimes that he were holy and godly, and to be taking up resolutions many times of renouncing the world. When the glories of Christianity are set before a man, he can hardly help wishing he were a Christian, and determining he will be no longer a slave to sin: but then, though there seem to be something of the will in this, yet there is no wholeness of heart in it, and it is but a sudden blaze that in an instant goes out. When such an one comes to question himself closely, and propose to himself a choice of God, and walking with him in his ways, in a rejection of all sin, especially the convenient pleasing bosom-sin, then the hypocrisy appears, he cannot consent to it, and the unsoundness of the double heart is made manifest.

"So you see a man may go a great way, and yet fall short of being a Christian. And that he always doth, when his *will* is not, through divine grace, upon the persuasive arguments of the Gospel, steadily and universally determined to serve God. However awakened his conscience, and clear his light and knowledge; whatever touches of joy or sorrow he may have felt in his affections about spiritual things; however reformed, regular, and civil his outward con-



duct; and whatsoever seemingly good desires he may have, and firm resolutions he may make; yet being deficient in the main thing, namely, a *will* and *heart* determined and fixed upon God, he is as yet but *almost* persuaded to be a Christian. That Agrippa had gone the most of this length seems evident from the history before us; he had *conscience* it appears from these very words; for his *knowledge* St. Paul appeals to him; he was certainly much *affected* with what the Apostle had been representing; he *wished* he were a Christian, he said, Thou hast almost persuaded me to be one; but there it stopped. The Gospel argument pleaded strongly, and there was an evident *motion* upon the *heart*; but he repressed the one and the other, and remained an *almost Christian*.

"And has not this been the case of others as well as Agrippa? Say, my friends, have none of you under the ministry of the word found your consciences greatly alarmed, the light of the Gospel breaking in upon you, your affections warm, your wishes earnest, your resolutions running high; in a word, *almost* persuaded to be Christians; and yet but almost persuaded; alas! to this day not prevailed upon to forsake all and follow Christ? What a pity, you say, that one so near the kingdom of God as Agrippa should stop short! What a pity, say I, this should be your case! and yet it is, many of you know it is. Ah, that it were otherwise! would to God that all that hear me this day were both almost and altogether such as was the Apostle!

"But, You will say, what made Agrippa stop, when he was so very near being a Christian? Alas, sirs! the very same things that have hindered you, the love of the world, and of the things of it. Conscience pleaded hard for his owning Christ; but he was a great man, his interest, honour, ease, and reputation, pleaded harder. He saw before his eyes what his owning Christ must bring him to; he knew the Apostle's only crime was heartily embracing Christianity, and should he run himself into a like wretched condition with this criminal by embracing it? He had no heart to this, he will be no Christian on these terms; conscience must yield, for he will not lose his honour, character, and worldly ease. So he smooths over the matter, pays St. Paul a compliment, agrees that he had done nothing worthy of death, or even of bonds; yet, to save himself from the suspicion of being a favourer of Christianity, does not drop a word of his being set at liberty (though that was entirely in the governor's power, and

was but justice to an innocent man); and, to keep fair with the Jews, refers him to the judgment of Cæsar. Here you see his *heart*; he was a time-server, a man of the world, who at bottom had not the least heart toward God, but would make conscience truckle to convenience. Could he be more than almost persuaded to be a Christian, while he was under this worldly bias? Had he given way to the convictions of his own mind and the secret workings of divine grace—instead of quenching, had he closed in with them, and at once made an honest profession of the truth of Christianity, as he then saw it, without hearkening to worldly considerations—he had been a Christian indeed. Here you see then what stops many, who are brought under concern for their souls, and, under the hearing of the Gospel are secretly moved to close in with it, from receiving it: they will not, they cannot, endure to think of parting with their worldly reputation, interest, or ease; they will not buy Christ so dear; they dismiss conscience for the time with a promise that when they have a more convenient season they will call for it again.

"Let this therefore be noted as a most certain yet tremendous truth, that all, who in the manner described have been almost persuaded to be Christians, and never wrought upon to be really so, have been hindered by the love of sin, by some worldly lust which they would not part with, or some carnal indulgence which they were determined to gratify. 'Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life,' says our Lord to the Pharisees. Why would they not? What! because they wanted means of conviction that he was the Christ? No, but because they *would* not; for, if they did, they must give up their worldly honour, interest, ease, and reputation. It is the same case with many of you, my dear friends; you *will* not come to Christ. It is not through want of conviction that there is salvation in none other, but because, if you do, you shall be laughed at, reproached, have your names cast out, perhaps suffer a little in your interests, or be forced to deny yourselves a course of life you have been long accustomed to. For these reasons you have many a time hitherto resisted the Gospel-offer, when it has been brought home to your ears and your consciences; and for the same miserable reasons I fear you will still persist in the same unhappy conduct. You see you cannot be Christians indeed unless you give up your *hearts* to God upon his Gospel-invitation and secret motion. This you have not yet done. Will you do it

now? Or will you not come to Christ for life? With your eyes open, will you desperately stand out still, and prefer the world (a mere nothing!) to the living God? How inexcusable must you then be in your own consciences! or how will you answer it to your souls in another world? I would gladly prevail with you to go one step further than Agrippa; and, in that view, to lay it seriously to heart whether there be any thing but despair out of Christ, and whether there be not infinitely more than we can desire in him. Consult your Bibles; see if any man ever went to heaven but in the way of renouncing the devil, the world, and the flesh; and, if not, make this day one vigorous effort for liberty and glory.

"The only further use I would make of this subject is, that, since the very life of Christianity consists in giving up the heart to God in a steady and universal choice of him and his ways, and seeing also there are so many ways wherein we may stop short of this self-denying determination, let me express my wish that we may all carefully examine ourselves whether we are brought sincerely to it: if we are not, that we may diligently seek it; and if we are, that we may diligently improve it: and that all of us may go beyond this Agrippa, and be not only *almost*, but *altogether*, Christians." Vol. ii. p. 398—403.

Prefixed to the sermons is a life of their excellent author. He was born at Exeter, on the 16th December 1714, and was the youngest of seven children. He was the grandson of Sir Thomas Walker, who represented the city of Exeter in many successive parliaments during the reigns of Charles the First and Second, and whose lady was the only daughter of the Rev. S. Hall, youngest son of the venerable Bishop Hall; a prelate to whom he was related by bonds more binding than those of consanguinity.

Mr. Walker, at eight years of age, was put to the Grammar school in Exeter; and at eighteen was sent to Exeter College, Oxford. In 1737 he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts; and in the same year was ordained to the curacy of Dodescomb-Leigh, near Exeter, where he continued to officiate till August 1738, when he made the tour of France with a younger brother of

Lord Rolle. On his return to England, in 1740, he became curate of Lanlivery, in Cornwall; and his vicar dying soon after, he was presented to the living, which he held till 1746, when he resigned it to another person, who then came of age, and entered on the curacy of Truro.

While Mr. Walker lived at Lanlivery he was much esteemed for the decency and regularity of his conduct. He was diligent, from a sense of duty, in preaching and catechising: nor did he neglect, at any season, to visit his parishioners, and give them his best advice. Such was even his concern for their eternal welfare, that in 1744, when labouring under a fever, he dictated a letter, which, in case of his death, might be put into the hands of such of his parishioners as neither his preaching nor his private admonitions had produced any effect upon. Had religion, therefore, required nothing more than external decency of manners, and the regular discharge of the common duties of relative or official life, Mr. Walker would have had little occasion either to alter his principles or to new-model his conduct. To consider, however, regularity in the observances of religious worship, abstinence from gross injustice and scandalous vice, and a readiness to do kind and benevolent actions, as constituting a claim to the Christian character, is to substitute the form of godliness for its power. Such a religion as this may, appear fair in the eyes of men, and may serve to stifle the accusations of conscience; but it will prove unavailing to any saving purpose. The true Christian, indeed, will be no less careful to adorn his profession by the exact performance of every external obligation; but he will go farther. He will look to the state of his heart and affections, and examine the principles which actuate his conduct. He will feel an habitual and earnest desire to be conformed, in the inward frame of his mind, to the image of his Saviour. He will be intent on mortifying



every corrupt propensity, both of the flesh and of the mind. He will renounce his own will, in every instance where it opposes the will of God. He will be zealous and unwearyed in the service of God and man, and in advancing the interests of the Redeemer's spiritual kingdom; and he will be meek and patient under all the injuries he may be called to bear for conscience's sake. The aim, the single aim of the Christian, to which every other is subordinate, is, to please God and to promote his glory. But this is a principle which will carry a man far beyond mere external observances; and which is also wholly incompatible with a worldly mind. It is one thing, therefore, to perform a good work because it is decent and becoming our station, or because it is necessary to the maintenance of our character, or the promotion of our interests: it is another to perform the same work from a paramount regard to the will and to the glory of God. The man who proposes no other end to himself but what is selfish, may nevertheless counterfeit acts both of piety and charity. It is only the Christian; the man that is "born of the Spirit;" who, from a motive of real love to God, arising from a sense of his having first loved and redeemed us, aims to please and to glorify God in the whole tenor of his life and conversation. "In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but a new creature." And unless the image of God, lost by the fall of our first parents, be restored, by an entire renovation wrought in the spirit of our minds, whatever be our outward conduct, we are still dead in trespasses and sins.

These observations will serve to explain the nature of those new views on the subject of religion, which Mr. Walker was led to embrace soon after his removal to Truro. Conversing with some friends on the nature and effects of justifying and saving faith, he began to suspect that as yet he was a

stranger to it. Under this impression he applied himself with diligence and fervid prayer to the study of the Scriptures; and he soon discovered that hitherto he had been ignorant of their true meaning and import, inattentive to the spiritual state of his own soul and that of others, and governed in his actions, not by the only Christian motives of love to God and man, but by such as were wholly selfish and worldly. He gained at the same time a farther insight into the real nature of man's spiritual disorder, and of the remedy afforded by the Gospel. The whole of this important subject will, perhaps, be better understood by the following transcript of what he himself wrote upon it.

"Seeing the Gospel revelation is a dispensation of grace; a remedy for a fallen creature; we must needs be sensible of those effects which the fall hath had on us, ere we can make a right use of the Gospel.

"For my own part, I lived many years in an entire ignorance of a corrupted nature; although I had learnt to reason in a speculative and historical way upon man's degeneracy. Since it hath pleased God in some measure to enlighten the eyes of my understanding, I look back upon those days of blindness, and plainly see that while I kept to an external customary decency, and in some sense regularity, I was influenced by and acted upon two hidden principles, as contrary to God as darkness is to light; the one, a prevailing desire of reputation and being esteemed, which went through all I did, followed me into all companies, dictated all I said, led me to compliance often in direct opposition to conscience, made me above all things fearful of being thought little of, directed all my sermons, both in writing and in speaking them, and in short swayed my whole life, till, I hope, the few latter years of it: the other, a desire of pleasure, which rendered me slothful, indolent, and restless out of company, eager after amusements, &c.; but this was so subordinate to the other, that I was always best delighted with such entertainments as gave me opportunity of setting off any excellence I might seem to have; such as music and dancing. By these two the strong man kept the palace of my heart, and all was peace; and that in so strange a manner, that I do not recollect the least suspicion of my being out of the way, for I had learned to rest upon my freedom

from the grossest vices, and keeping a sort of strictness in attending upon the forms of my ministry, and especially in engaging others to attend them.

" ' Were I to say with how many heart-felt pangs of fear and disquietude I have been brought during these latter years to any reasonable measure of indifference about the esteem of the world, I should describe the passages which have most engrossed my mind. The love of pleasure decayed first; but yet I could only part with it by degrees: and many things of that sort I continued in, when I had no pleasure in them, because I was ashamed to leave them.' "

" ' As I was ignorant of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, and of my want of him in all his offices, so I had not taken the least notice of the spiritual state of others. It was to me as a thing I had no concern with, that sins of the grossest kind were committed on every side of me. And after I was ordained, I had no sight or thought of the condition my parishioners were in, though I had some desire that they should come to church and sacrament, and not drink, swear, and the like.' "

" ' The corruption of man's nature, his misery and helplessness: the satisfaction and sufficiency of Christ; the necessity of a renewed mind; the need of the work of the Spirit: these I knew notionally, but neither felt nor taught them practically. Nevertheless I was thought well of, and indeed esteemed beyond most of my brethren for my regularity, decency, endeavours to keep up external attendances, and somewhat or other in my public addresses. Would to God I were the only one intrusted with the Gospel in these circumstances! It was at least a year after the kind providence of God brought me to Truro ere I fell under considerable suspicions or uneasiness about myself and my manner of preaching; when, by the frequent conversation of a Christian friend (verily the first person I had met with truly possessed of the mind of Christ), I became sensible all was wrong within and without. My uneasiness was rather abiding than violent, possibly because my life had been free of gross sins, having been used in a good measure to follow the direction of my conscience; and the change wrought upon me was slow, till under a variety of means I was brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.' " Vol. i. pp. xi.—xiii.

The change which had taken place in his views necessarily led to a considerable alteration in the style of his preaching, both as it respected

the choice of his subjects and the manner of his address. He dealt with his hearers as perishing sinners, shewed the danger of their dependence on their formality and self-righteousness, and preached salvation only through faith in the blood of Christ. Through the powerful influence of the Spirit of God, this scriptural method of preaching produced a great effect. Much surprise and indignation were excited. These feelings, however, were mixed with a secret fear that all was not right with them, and with a curiosity to hear more of the matter. At length many came to Mr. Walker, inquiring what they should do to be saved; and their number increased so greatly as to require his utmost diligence. He found them ignorant in the highest degree, and he devoted the evenings, after their business was over, to their instruction. His labours, through the blessing of God, were effectual to the conversion of numbers, whose conduct shewed their faith to be both lively and sincere. In order to preserve them from defection, and to promote their edification and growth in grace, he formed them into a religious society for the purpose of religious reading, conversation, and prayer, on the plan laid down by the Rev. Dr. Josiah Woodward, in his account of the Rise and Progress of the Religious Societies in and about London, &c.;—a book which stands on the list of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in Bartlett's Buildings, and which has lately been reprinted at York. The rules and regulations, as well as the liturgy, instituted by Mr. Walker, will be found in this account of his life \*.

A society was also composed, through Mr. Walker's means, of the neighbouring clergy, with a view to improve each other in Christian knowledge, and to fit them for better edifying their flock, and better discharging all their ministerial duties.

\* For a further account of Mr. Walker's societies, see the first volume of the *Christian Observer*.



A great outcry was made against this meeting, as methodistical; though nothing is more certain, as Mr. Walker himself observes, than that all the members were zealously attached to the Church of England, both its doctrine and discipline. They met on the first Tuesday in the month, at each other's houses, in rotation, at ten; dined at two; and stayed not later than six;—the person at whose house the meeting was held, presiding, and regulating the order of proceeding. Before they entered on business, they always offered up their joint prayers to God for his blessing, in a form, collected by Mr. Walker from the Liturgy, the Whole Duty of Man, and Mr. Jenks's Devotions. The following queries were drawn up for every member to put to himself:

“ 1. What is it that I have in view, or what is my mind chiefly engaged upon? Is it the setting forth of God's glory? or, is there some worldly meaner matter which has as much room in my thoughts as that?

“ 2. When I sit down to make a sermon, or when I go into the pulpit to preach it, is my mind running on the performing of a task, or on gaining esteem by performing it well? or, am I chiefly concerned to do something for God?

“ 3. Would I rather that the interest of Christ, whose minister I am, be advanced in the world, though I should thereby forfeit ease and other conveniencies, than favour these, to the neglecting of his interest?

“ 4. What is my view as a member of this society? How may I know whether I am employing myself here to the best purposes, agreeably to the design of the meeting?

“ 5. Do I continually look up for divine grace to accompany and prosper my ministrations? And, in this strength, am I often inquiring after the success of my ministry with anxiety? And, relying on Gospel promises for this strength, am I continually seeking it in prayer, public and private?

“ 6. Am I satisfied with the answer that my conscience makes to these questions, as I could wish to be when I shall be lying on my death-bed, when every thought will sink to the bottom of my soul, and when I am just to be called upon to render up my account of this important charge and ministry?” Vol. i. p. xxix.

Mr. Walker's conduct naturally

drew on him much reproach and censure, particularly from those whom it had formerly been his chief solicitude to please. This was a great trial to a man who had been passionately fond of the world's esteem. However, in spite of every selfish motive, God kept him faithful, and enabled him to make an open and unreserved profession of the truth, not only by framing his own private conduct according to its dictates, but by zealously discharging the duties of his public ministry. Having in view the glory of God, and the salvation of the souls committed to his charge; he studied not so much to please the ear, as to inform the understanding and amend the heart. The spirituality of God's law, its extensive demands, its tremendous denunciations;—the folly of resting in the form of godliness without the power;—the grace of the Gospel, as the plan devised by Infinite Wisdom for the recovery of fallen man;—the necessity of renouncing our own wisdom, righteousness, and strength, and receiving the offered salvation of Christ as the only ground of our hope;—the various offices of Christ Jesus, as an atonement and intercessor, a prophet and a king, teaching and guiding them; protecting, governing, and comforting his people by his word and the influences of his Spirit;—pardon and acceptance only through the blood and righteousness of Christ;—the necessity of a real and universal change of heart and life; of becoming new creatures, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; and of observing all the relative and social duties of life:—these were the great themes on which he dwelt in his sermons, and by enforcing which he endeavoured to train his hearers for heaven;—and his labour in the Lord was not in vain. He was much engaged also in the neglected duty of catechizing. In this he spent every Sunday evening from six to eight, during the spring and autumn quarters. In the summer he had a catechetical lecture every Thursday evening; and in winter a lecture

every Sunday evening on Christ's sermon on the mount. During the last two years of his ministry a considerable number of young persons were awakened, for whose benefit he instituted a private lecture twice a week, in his own room, in the evening. But besides these public labours, by which his health was much impaired, his room was continually resorted to for private advice, except on the Saturdays, which he always reserved to himself, in order to prepare for the Sunday: and he reckoned that from first to last, about a thousand of the inhabitants of the town, besides strangers, had thus resorted to him. After he became so much engaged, he had but little time for general reading. The Bible was then almost the only book he studied. From this sacred fountain he drew his deep and practical acquaintance with divine truth.

The blessing which had attended Mr. Walker's ministrations at Truro, seemed to constitute a new and affecting relation between him and his flock; and it became his fixed purpose that no worldly consideration should induce him to leave them. On this account he gave up the living of Talland, to which he had been presented, and remained satisfied with his curacy at Truro, although his circumstances were so narrow that he was obliged to live in rather mean lodgings. Here, however, though his habitation and his fare were of the plainest kind, yet, with a mind wholly intent on the work of his ministry, he lived in contentment and peace.—A remarkable proof of Mr. Walker's zeal for the salvation of souls appeared in his exertions among a regiment of soldiers, who were stationed for a short time at Truro, and among whom he laboured incessantly during their stay. About a hundred of them were excited by his means to an earnest concern for their salvation, and a considerable amendment was produced in the external conduct of the regiment at large. The captains of companies, in a body, waited on Mr. Walker, to return

him thanks for the reformation wrought by his useful labours.

Mr. Walker very strongly pressed on those who consulted him, the necessity of a diligent attention to the duties of their secular callings, assuring them that the peace of their minds would be more effectually promoted by an industrious application to those employments, in the fear of God and in obedience to his will, than by studying religious books, or engaging in religious exercises, to the neglect of their proper business; a representation, the truth of which has been abundantly confirmed by experience.

His preaching, and his conversation, as well as his writings, were of a very heart-searching kind. His system of morality was one which was founded on a growing discovery and humbling sense of the sinfulness, guilt, and impotence of our fallen nature, as necessary to our cordially receiving Jesus Christ in his mediatorial offices. On this knowledge of our fallen state, depend the right manner of our seeking pardon and acceptance with God through Christ, and our attaining to holiness of heart and life by the sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit, in consequence of our vital union with Christ.

In April 1760, Mr. Walker was disabled by ill-health from performing any farther service in the public congregation. A fever, which confined him for some weeks, was followed by a consumptive cough. He was invited by the Earl of Dartmouth to Blackheath, to try the effect of change of air, as well as to be in the way of enjoying the best medical advice. Here, and also at Bristol, where he resided some time, he was much visited; and, by means of his conversation, he was made greatly instrumental in promoting the good of many. He continued to the very last to give suitable exhortations to those who were about him. On several occasions he was heard to say, that he blessed God, that, on the review of his life for ten years past, he was able to see evi-



dent marks of his having lived with a single eye to God's glory. "The nearer I advance towards eternity, the more I am confirmed in the truth of the doctrines I have preached and published. I am sure they will stand the test of the last day." Nothing was more remarkable in him than the constant, even, and undisturbed tranquillity he maintained. His soul was all submission to the will of God: and his concern seemed to be, whether he lived or died, to live or die unto the Lord. He died at Blackheath in the month of July, 1761.

Mr. Walker was tall in his person, and of a pleasing countenance; and his general deportment was such as commanded respect, being grave and dignified. He was at the same time remarkably affable and cheerful in his intercourse with others. In conversation he delivered his sentiments with great fluency and clearness, and shewed great depth of thought. He had a quick apprehension and a solid judgment; and was very exact and methodical in the arrangement of his ideas. Logic had always been a favourite study with him, and he strongly recommended the cultivation of this art to his young friends. He was particularly adverse to the practice, now we fear too common, of quoting scraps of scripture, as they stand by themselves, and building opinions on them which the context will not warrant. He advised his young clerical friends, in opposition to this slothful and pernicious practice, to consider each passage with reference to what went before and followed after, and likewise to mark attentively the analogy which it bore to the general plan of salvation by grace.

We have been induced to lay before our readers the above short abstract of the life of this eminent minister, in the hope that the perusal of it might not be unattended with a blessing to many who may not have ready access to the work itself. May the Almighty be pleased to raise up

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in his vineyard many such faithful and successful labourers as Mr. Walker!

*Reasons for declining to become a Subscriber to the British and Foreign Bible Society, stated in a Letter to a Clergyman of the Diocese of London.* By C. WORDSWORTH, D. D. London: Rivingtons. 1810. Price 1s.

*A Letter to the Rev. C. Wordsworth, D.D. in Reply to his Strictures on the British and Foreign Bible Society.* By LORD TEIGNMOUTH, its President. London: Hatchard. 1810. Price 1s.

*A Letter addressed to the Rev. Dr. Wordsworth, in Reply to his "Reasons for declining to become a Subscriber to the British and Foreign Bible Society."* By W. DEALTRY, M.A. London: Hatchard. 1810. Price 1s. 6d.

*A Letter on the Subject of the British and Foreign Bible Society, addressed to the Rev. Dr. Gaskin.* By a Friend of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. London: Hatchard. Price 2s.

*An Inquiry into the Claims of the British and Foreign Bible Society to the Support of Members of the Established Church.* By the Rev. J. H. SPRY. Rivingtons. Price 1s. 6d.

CONTROVERSIES, like rivers, sometimes disappear; but, alas! like rivers also, they re-appear, with streams more turbid than ever. We had watched with unfeigned satisfaction the controversy respecting the Bible Society sink from the eye of the public; but when we were least prepared for its revival, it at once bursts out, and is now again sweeping the plains of Zion with its torrent. Deeply, however, as we lament the revival of the contest, we have some consolation in regarding the spirit in which, for the most part, it is conducted. Indeed, we have great reason to thank God for the pacific character of the days in which we live. It is no longer, as in

the age of Cromwell, the favourite motto of religionists, "the praises of God in our mouths, and a two-edged sword in our hands." The lion and the lamb have, in some degree, learned to "lie down together;" are content to "gambol in the same shade" of our national oaks, and to "feed at the same crib" of national prosperity and comfort. Controversies are conducted with less ardour than formerly; and if polemics defend their cause with less learning, they do not so often betray it by the display of tempers which at once force us to suspect the principles, by the practical consequences to which they seem to lead. The refinement of the age happily forbids the employment of the coarse weapons of our ancestors' warfare: and as in affairs of honour, or rather dishonour, the subtle and polite bullet has succeeded to the coarser cudgel; so both in single-handed contests, or in general crusades, for the peace of the Gospel, the combatants slay one another with a decency and grace to which our ancestors were wholly strangers. The present controversy, on the whole, as we have already observed, rather establishes than shakes this reputation of our own days. Would to God, if the controversy must be, that there were no violations of the rules of "blessed charity!" But rather would to God that men discovered no ground of controversy; that Ephraim would no more vex Judah, nor Judah Ephraim! As, however, the question of the Bible Society is now agitated, we feel ourselves once more compelled to "buckle on our armour." But as the pamphlets before us do not, we conceive, embrace the whole of what is likely to be published, we design to enter but partially into the argument. We shall first give an abstract of the several works; and then, if our space shall suffice state and examine a few of the most important propositions which are controverted by these writers.

And first—not, indeed, because

we think they deserve the precedence, but because it is a desirable object to get rid of the business we least like the first; or, in the language of the nursery, to "keep our plums till the last,"—let us hear what the opponents of the Bible Society have to say for themselves.

Mr. Spry, the most bilious and choleric by far of all the combatants, begins (p. 4) by instructing us in the caution with which we should regard all new institutions, and particularly those which propose to themselves religious objects. Now, considering that all societies previous to those of our own days are obviously of divine original; considering that a promise is made of perpetuating religion, and disseminating the Bible, by a succession of positive miracles; considering that the face of the times never change; considering that the great enemy of the truth never employs any new devices for its ruin; no one can hesitate to believe and applaud all that Mr. Spry says upon this subject; to decide that all which is old is good, all that is new is bad; that the Roman catholic is the only true church; that protestantism is a perilous innovation; and that it becomes us to repent of our apostasy from the good principles of transubstantiation and purgatory. We recommend a passage in the Speeches of Lord Chatham beginning, "The crime of being a young man," &c. to Mr. Spry's consideration.

The author next proceeds (p. 6) to point his important caution at the Bible Society; from the ascent of which institution, indeed, upon the religious horizon, our philosopher appears, by an easy induction, to have inferred this great principle with regard to innovation. In the same page, however, the author asserts (though, as will be seen, he afterwards gives us some reasons to suspect his sincerity on this point) the duty of dispersing the Scriptures. In pages 8 and 9 he teaches us—perhaps the only perfectly novel fact or doctrine in all the pamphlet



—that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and that for the Propagation of the Gospel, are, “together, competent to do most of what the new Society promises;” and “confidently appeals to the history of their transactions for proof that they have the zeal and knowledge requisite for the accomplishment of their important designs.” As he does not condescend to enter into any proofs of this broad position, or to shew us how a channel already completely filled could receive ten times the quantity when poured into it, we must beg leave, at least, to suspend our assent. He then (p. 9) enters into an elaborate panegyric on these two societies; grounding it almost exclusively upon the character of retirement and modesty by which they are signalised—so signalised, indeed, “that their existence,” he says, “is unknown to many even among the members of the established church.” Now, there is very much to commend in these institutions. There is no reasonable panegyrist, or true friend, whose praises should exceed our own. But, really, when that species of unobtrusiveness which shrouds the very being of the society is erected into a ground of applause, we must suspect either the judgment or the sincerity of the panegyrist. The early Christians were an unobtrusive body; but did their humility drive them to so deep a retreat that no man knew where to hear their opinions or watch their practice? Jesus Christ was meek and unobtrusive; but was he not also to be found in the haunts and circles of men? Mr. Spry himself, we hope, is an unobtrusive character; but those in want of his opinions will know at what church to hear them, and in what pamphlet to read them.

Unobtrusiveness may, with scarcely any limitation, be inculcated upon individuals; because humility is the duty of every individual, but publicity is not. But publicity is of the very essence of a society, whose object is the general good. They

are a “city which must be set on a hill” to be useful; and therefore cannot with impunity descend into a valley.—Page 10 exhibits a strong attack upon the Bible Society for publishing any Reports. Of this attack none can doubt the justice, who do not see that the praise of actions divided among thousands does not materially endanger the humility of any single individual; and who does not know how ill-satisfied the subscribers to any institution are to have their money spent without any knowledge of its destination. In the 11th page the society are actually charged with magnifying the sum total of the benefits they have attempted to confer;—a charge we should think fatal to the honour either of the accuser or accused. In p. 12, we are taught, from the foregoing premises, by a complete *non-sequitur*, that the Bible Society must at least be suspected;—in p. 13, that no cordiality can possibly exist amongst its members; when the fact is, that it has existed;—in p. 14, that experience has proved this allegation; when the fact is, that the experiment has never before been tried. In p. 15, by a second *non-sequitur*, it is clearly demonstrated that the Bible Society is most unwarrantably commended. In p. 16, the probable minority of the members of the establishment, and their consequent obligation to sanction the measures of the dissenting majority, are lamented; when nothing is so obvious, as that from this the minority may at once release themselves by quitting the society. In p. 17, it is demonstrated that the Bible Society is necessarily a dissenting society, because they are stated to be so in some dissenting Almanack. Then it is affirmed (Mr. S. does not say when and where), that the society assumes the title of a dissenting society, which assuredly the Bible Society does not. After this, a brisk attack is opened upon the society for publishing a Welsh edition of the Scriptures, the justice of which charge shall be hereafter examined. At p. 23, the au-

thor having for a while fought under the mask of a desire to disperse the Scriptures, in a paroxysm of zeal throws it off, and boldly maintains that it is questionable whether, under certain circumstances, the distribution of the Bible is expedient; and in the developement of his argument seems to maintain, that, if it be possible for dissenters to purchase and distribute Bibles, they had better not be printed;—an argument irresistible with those who know that there are in the kingdom, ten dissenters to one churchman, and that the hands of churchmen are tied up from purchasing and distributing Bibles. Page 24 contains a pathetic lamentation for the lapse of the old golden days, and the advent of this iron age, “in which men are taught to read and judge for themselves.” The same strain of lamentation continues through several pages, till at last, in language that must cheer the fallen Pope in his retreat at Savona, our weeping prophet complains that the good old method of “seeking wisdom at the mouth of the priest” (instead, we presume, of consulting the Bible, and comparing the word of the priest with the word of God), “is daily growing more and more into disrepute.”—Can this be the language of the nineteenth century, and of a Protestant? When the mountain would not go to Mahomet, we know that Mahomet went to the mountain; and if Mr. Spry’s parishioners will not come to him, let him go to his parishioners, and they will no longer want what Mr. Spry, at least, will probably account a faithful interpreter of the Bibles dispersed among them. After some few sentences, tending to establish the grand position that it is “now more necessary to teach men what they ought to do, than what they ought to believe;” a sentiment quite consistent with the known correctness of public opinion upon matters of religion, and strongly illustrative of the doctrine “whosoever believeth not shall be damned;” and after certain other very harmless ob-

jections and panegyrics; the author closes a pamphlet which, if we are any thing of prophets, neither his friends nor his enemies will be at any pains to remember.

Our sentiments have been sufficiently intimated *en passant*, to suffer us, without dwelling any longer upon this protestant papist, to pass on to the letter of a far more respectable antagonist.

Dr. Wordsworth is domestic Chaplain to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury; and the appointment, we conceive, reflects honour on both the parties concerned. He has rendered material service to sacred literature by his Letters on the Use of the Definitive Article; and a late work of his, on Ecclesiastical Biography, is at this moment before us. Dr. W. has now thought it right to address the public on the subject of the Bible Society. His pamphlet has the negative merit of not appearing till a solicitation to assist in the formation of a subsidiary Bible Society forced an avowal of his sentiments from him; and it has the positive merit of being written, for the most part, in the spirit of mildness and urbanity. Reserving at present our observations upon some of the principal objections urged by him, either singly or in common with Mr. Spry, we shall, as before, briefly notify our sentiments with regard to the mass of his letter, in making an abstract of it.

After some general statement of his sentiments with respect to the society, Dr. Wordsworth (p. 7) avows, in the most explicit manner, his sense of the duty of circulating the Scriptures both at home and abroad. He next states, that had the society confined itself to the circulation of the Scriptures *abroad*, though he might still have discovered “some things unwise and offensive in its constitution, it would have obtained and deserved, not perhaps a more extensive patronage, but one much wiser, and therefore more salutary; a patronage founded far deeper in wisdom and piety, and in the



blessing of God." To this sentence we have a variety of objections. It is scarcely English to talk of an institution "founded deep in the blessing of God." It is mere assumption to say that a society instituted after his model would be so blessed. It is somewhat arrogant, when we regard the success of its operations, to assume that the Bible Society is not so blessed.—The author next proceeds (p. 9) to state his capital objection to this society, that "it has a direct and baneful operation to interfere with, impede, and curtail the inestimable interests of true religion, by" (we suppose, for the sentence is of very doubtful aspect) "intrenching upon, impairing, and disparaging (p. 11) the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge." We shall not stay at present to investigate the truth of this allegation, or its weight if true. Dr. Wordsworth next instructs us, very wisely, in what in itself constitutes a sufficient defence of the Bible Society, in circulating the Scriptures "*at home*," as well as "*abroad*;" that "the first and nearest charge and care of every clergyman; indeed, generally speaking, of every man, is his own flock and immediate neighbourhood." But he thus instructs us merely to insist upon the duty of supporting the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and opposing the Bible Society. Then (p. 12) comes a declaration (hereafter to be examined), also without any proof, that he who is induced to subscribe to the Bible Society, who would otherwise have subscribed to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, is thereby seduced to embrace a less good, where he might have possessed one infinitely greater; is injured in his most important interests; and the author cannot but "feel for religion itself, and the church of God, as suffering in his person a lamentable loss, injury, and defalcation." All this proceeds upon assumptions, which are hereafter, as we have said, to be investigated.

Dr. Wordsworth next affirms, that "it is easy to perceive" (which it certainly is, when he has said so, but not before) "that a sincere and zealous dissenter ought to regard these extraordinary exertions of the Bible Society with a portion of the same jealousy which he does." Now if the churchmen and dissenters attached to the Bible Society have nearly the same ground for jealousy of its operations, is not this a ground of hope, that, while the society promotes the common object of both, it will not serve the private ends of either. It remains for the clergy to employ the bibles so distributed, to the establishment of that particular church which they conceive most analogous to the platform exhibited in Scripture.—The author next reverts to a wish, more than once expressed, that churchmen should maintain their own society; that dissenters should possess theirs; that if a new society in any degree after the model of this be necessary, its operation should be confined to foreign distribution; and, after "hanging his heavens with black," and hinting at clouds which are likely soon to burst over the church in the shape of "important deficiencies, and possibilities of evil, extant in and resulting from the society thus constituted," he concludes with expressing wishes, we doubt not very sincere, for the preservation and purity of the church.

In casting up the account between Dr. Wordsworth and the public, we conceive that they are indebted to him for the honest zeal which he displays in the defence of our admirable establishment; for the warmth, without asperity, with which he supports his cause; and for the general spirit of politeness and benevolence which prevails throughout his letter. He is debtor, on the other hand, we conceive, for a style somewhat obscure; for arguments a little illogical; for premises not pushed on to their natural and legitimate conclusions; for conclusions somewhat in-

accurately deduced from unsound premises; for language so alarming as to the consequences of the society's operations, as possibly to break the rest of many an honest citizen, who would otherwise have been sure to sleep the better for the guinea he had given to it.

The only arrows recently pointed at the society, we fancy have been shot from these two quivers. We therefore now proceed to examine the force which is marshalled in the opposite ranks.

And here we have first an anonymous letter addressed to Dr. Gaskin, the secretary of the Bartlett's Buildings' Society. We trust, that a justification of the Bible Society is unnecessary to Dr. Gaskin; but, at all events, we consider it as somewhat injudicious to address such a justification to him. Dr. Gaskin is known hitherto, we conceive, as the zealous servant of the Bartlett's Buildings' Society—not as the enemy of the sister society. After this remark, however, on the very threshold of his work, it would be difficult to complain of any movement of the author. We will briefly abstract his little work.

He sets out by avowing his respect for the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; and declares that his motive for subscribing to the Bible Society, far from originating in disrespect to the other, is merely, that he conceives it inadequate to the demand which the times make upon it. He then mentions some facts, in order to corroborate this statement. He speaks of parishes even in England almost destitute of Bibles; asserts the want of them to be considerable in Scotland; and tells us, from personal knowledge of Ireland, that, one might have travelled from the Giant's Causeway to Bantry Bay, from one extremity of the kingdom to the other, avoiding the chief towns, but visiting every cabin by the way, without finding perhaps 300 perfect Bibles amongst three millions of people! We leave the

contenders for the vigour and sufficiency of the old societies to digest this fact, of the authenticity of which we have no doubt.—The author then states the readiness of the Irish peasant to receive the word of God: "he hides it in his cabin, and reads it with an eagerness that cannot be conceived." The author next adverts to the state of Europe, and shews how even war has been made the medium of spiritual good, by opening the kingdoms of the Continent to the ingress of the Bible. After surveying the Roman catholic countries, he turns to Turkey; predicts its prostration, its consequent escape from the tyranny and bigotry of the Mufti, and the fresh avenue thereby opened for the march of the Scriptures. He then states the peculiar facilities for the dispersion of the Bible furnished by the universal naval empire of Great Britain. At p. 15, the author enters upon a well-deserved panegyric on the late Bishop of London; and infers—from his approbation we will not call it, but—from his intense interest—an interest which he surrendered only with his parting breath—in the prosperity of the society, the utter improbability of its real hostility or dangerous influence to that church of which he was so revered and affectionate a parent. There is some forcible and eloquent writing in these as well as in the successive pages of his work, in which he deprecates the facility and rashness with which, as "madmen cast about fire," well-wishers to the church fling out their imputations of Methodism. He then calls up some other bishops, as witnesses in the same cause; and adds to the catalogue the noble president of the society, and the present certainly not sectarian prime minister. He next (p. 41) enters upon a numerical proof, that the Bible Society has not lessened the quantity of money received, or the quantity of good done, by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge: but as the like evidence is more fully collected in an



other pamphlet, we shall produce it in its proper place. He then proceeds to state the difference of effect in the year 1800, by the single efforts of the Bartlett's Buildings' Society, and that of 1809, by the united efforts of the two societies; which difference in Bibles and Testaments is nothing less than 86,120. Another fact this, which the champions of the all-sufficiency of the old society will be under some difficulty to explain. He then (p. 45) points out the benefit of the provincial societies established under the wing of the parent society in London; re-asserts the facility of the clergy maintaining an ascendancy in the society; right royally commends it to the patronage of the King; and contends that, however grand a pillar the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge may be of the establishment, he thinks the establishment may stand, though the society fall.

The next pamphlet to which we would advert, is that of Lord Teignmouth, the noble president of the Bible Society. This nobleman, if the society over which he presides be indeed a national evil, is certainly an enemy of his country; for under the shelter of his vigilance and wisdom, and in the sunshine of his patronage, it has ripened to its present maturity. If this society is an offence to good men, he is "the most offending man alive." But if, on the contrary, the dissemination of the Scriptures is a national benefit; if this society is so projected as to collect much of the fire which might otherwise consume the land, and concentrate it to one important point, and confine it to one safe channel; if it is a public benefit to keep out of sight the points of difference between men, and call up those on which they are agreed; if—we had almost said, if it is a national benefit that we ourselves should hear the glad tidings of salvation, and publish them to others; then Great Britain ought to recognize in Lord Teignmouth, not only one of her best men, but one of her best patriots.—Let us,

however, proceed from the man to his pamphlet.

Lord Teignmouth's pamphlet is, we conceive, rather a hasty production. And this opinion we collect, not from the style of the work, for, writing however rapidly, his lordship would not fail to write well; but from one or two expressions, which we are persuaded that his known benevolence and urbanity would have led him on more mature reflection to have qualified. We allude to his charging Dr. Wordsworth (p. 4) with reprobating the society, with employing the language of invective, and with violating the laws of decorum. But though we are of opinion that these charges do not in strict propriety apply to Dr. Wordsworth, still we conceive that none but an ungenerous adversary would make them a subject of serious complaint, but would, if he disapproved of the expressions as too strong, yet make the most candid allowance for the feeling in which they originated. With this trivial exception, it is impossible not to be pleased with the temperate spirit, and the sound argumentation, of this pamphlet, which to us appears well calculated to remove any prejudices that may have been imbibed with respect to the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The matter of the noble Lord's pamphlet differs little from that of the last we have examined. Indeed, the defenders of the Society have no want of new armour. The weapons of their former warfare are still hanging in their halls, and are more than competent to repel all the force brought against them. Lord Teignmouth, however, (p. 10) is in this distinguished from the last writer, that he conceives the funds of the Bible Society could not be profitably transferred to the coffers of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. Without entering minutely into the argument, he states, as the foundation of this opinion (p. 14), the "limited nature of its constitution." He then (p. 17) adverts to the vast medium of com-

munication which the varied resources of the new society have furnished; traces with feeling and eloquence the history of its triumphs; denies that any spirit of rivalry prevails in the Bible Society against its venerable sister institution; quotes the individuals, societies, and churches, who have considered this institution, not as the organ of change, but as the pillar of national prosperity; and ends with a wish, in which we cordially concur, that the respectable name of his opponent may be ranked in the catalogue of its friends.

We will add but one more observation concerning this pamphlet; that, should Lord Teignmouth feel it right to enter upon a more extended vindication of himself and the society, his assailants will probably find that the *corps de reserve* is far stronger than what they may have falsely conceived to be the main army.

The last pamphlet we have to notice is that of Mr. Dealtry, a respondent, like Lord Teignmouth, to Dr. Wordsworth, and a brother in warfare of whom his Lordship has no reason to be ashamed. This pamphlet is evidently the production of an acute, ingenious, playful, and candid mind; and even had there been more faults in it than we have been sharp-sighted enough to discover, yet we have been so delighted, in a work of controversy, to discover so many touches of nature and kindness as it exhibits, that we believe we should freely have forgiven the author.

Mr. Dealtry has trod so much of the same country with his two fellow-travellers, that we shall deem it unnecessary to follow him step by step. If our space admitted it, we should gladly gratify our readers with some extracts in which we think he has clearly exposed the weakness of Dr. Wordsworth's argument. There are two extracts, however, of a very different cast, which we cannot forbear giving.

The first is a numerical proof that the Bible Society has not injured the funds of the Bartlett's Buildings' Society. After stating his con-

jecture that many individuals, thinking it right, when aiding the general cause, to aid also the institution peculiarly our own, have been induced, on becoming subscribers to the new, to subscribe also to the old society, Mr. Dealtry adds—

“This question admits of a decision far more accurate than can arise from vague conjectures, either on your part or mine. Let us bring it fairly to the test. To do this, I have only to propose two questions:

“1. Has the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge suffered any diminution in its receipts, its contributions, or its subscriptions, during the five years in which the Bible Society has existed? And if not,

“2. Has its increase, during the last five years, been at a rate inferior to that which obtained in the five years before?

“If these questions are answered in the negative, my inference is irresistible.

“The following extracts I make from the Annual Reports of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, commencing with the year which ended on the 26th of March, 1801.—I must request you to bear in mind, that the Bible Society was founded in March 1804.

*Receipts.*

From March 27,	l.	s.	d.
1800, to March 26, 1801 . . .	11,066	14	2
1801, to April 1, 1802 . . . .	11,779	15	8
1802, to March 31, 1803 . . .	12,039	3	9
1803, to April 5, 1804 . . . .	12,390	1	8
1804, to April 4, 1805 . . . .	12,424	5	2
1805, to March 27, 1806 . . .	13,752	8	6
1806, to April 2, 1807 . . . .	13,494	6	0
1807, to March 31, 1808 . . .	13,923	9	5
1808, to April 13, 1809 . . .	17,910	19	5

*Benefactions and Legacies in the same Years, for the general Purposes of the Society.*

1800 to 1801 . . . . .	457	13	2
1801 to 1802 . . . . .	905	5	6
1802 to 1803 . . . . .	543	14	0
1803 to 1804 . . . . .	377	14	6
1804 to 1805 . . . . .	406	18	8
1805 to 1806 . . . . .	1,150	11	6
1806 to 1807 . . . . .	1,587	4	0
1807 to 1808 . . . . .	771	0	5
1808 to 1809 . . . . .	924	19	7

*Subscriptions in the same Years.*

1800 to 1801 . . . . .	2,029	7	0
1801 to 1802 . . . . .	2,239	2	0
1802 to 1803 . . . . .	2,119	15	0
1803 to 1804 . . . . .	2,549	8	0
1804 to 1805 . . . . .	2,431	18	0
1805 to 1806 . . . . .	2,713	0	0
1806 to 1807 . . . . .	2,477	8	0
1807 to 1808 . . . . .	2,697	0	0
1808 to 1809 . . . . .	3,413	9	0



"Hence I draw the following conclusions\*:

"1. The annual average of receipts, for the four years preceding the establishment of the Bible Society, was

	L.	s.	D.
	11,818	18	7

"2. The annual average of the last five years, viz. since its establishment, is

	L.	s.	D.
	14,301	1	8

—a very considerable increase.

"3. The annual average of benefactions for general purposes, in the four years preceding, was

	L.	s.	D.
	572	6	9

"4. The annual average of the same, for the last five years, is

	L.	s.	D.
	964	2	7

"If I add the sums mentioned in the notes of the several Reports, as given for specific purposes, the average is prodigiously greater.

"5. The average of subscriptions in the four years preceding, was

	L.	s.	D.
	2,234	6	9

"6. The average of the same for the last five years, is

	L.	s.	D.
	2,747	10	0

"7. The difference of receipts on the 26th of March, 1801, and on the 5th of April, 1804, or the absolute increase, was

	L.	s.	D.
	1,323	7	6

"8. The same difference, or increase, between the 27th of March, 1806, and 13th of April, 1809, being the same period, is

	L.	s.	D.
	4,158	10	11

"9. The absolute increase of subscriptions from the 26th of March, 1801, to the 5th of April, 1804, was

	L.	s.	D.
	519	16	0

"10. The absolute increase of the same, from the 27th of March, 1806, to the 13th of April, 1809, comprehending the same period, is

	L.	s.	D.
	695	9	0

"So that not only have the receipts and subscriptions increased, but the rate of increase has been greatly accelerated, since the establishment of the Bible Society: and it should be particularly observed, that the funds and subscriptions of both Societies re-

ceived their greatest augmentation in the same year—viz. in the year ending in March 1809. Hence I infer,

"11. That a part, at least, of this increase in our funds at Bartlett's Buildings, is owing to the Bible Society. It was indeed to be expected, *a priori*, that an institution like this would call forth the activity of others, and provoke many to love and to good works: the attention which it has excited has been highly favourable to other benevolent societies, though they may attach little value to the favour conferred.

"If I have made no error in calculation, my first ten conclusions are as clear as any corollary in Euclid; and I consider the eleventh as undoubtedly just." p. 18—22.

The above statement we conceive to require some very considerable qualifications; but into these we have not time to enter; nor are we aware that such qualifications would materially affect the general results.

The other extract from Mr. Deastry is of a more lively cast, and our readers will be struck with the felicity with which it is executed.

"Once upon a time, in the midst of a parched and dreary land, there gushed from the top of a mountain a fine spring of water, which carried gladness and fertility wherever it flowed: the wilderness was converted into a garden near its banks, and verdure and cultivation were the sure companions of its progress. After some time, a similar stream began to flow from the summit of a neighbouring hill: it became the parent of many branching rivulets, which cheered the face of Nature on every side, and carried happiness and abundance into the remotest lands. The good old stream was a little touched with 'jealousy;' and, conscious of the inestimable benefits which itself had conferred, expostulated with its un aspiring neighbour in the following terms:—'Do you not know that you are intruding into a country which I have 'pre-occupied;' and that you and your rivulets have a 'direct and baneful operation to interfere with, impede, and curtail, the inestimable interests' of grass and green fields, which I have so happily promoted?'—'Why, how can that be? Are not my streams pure and salubrious as your own; and does not the desert smile likewise wherever I go?'—'Your streams do, indeed, profess to be pure—though I have something, if I choose, to say upon that point;—but I insist upon it that I am the good old stream, and that you are an interloper; and I should

"\* Had I possessed the Report of March 1800, I could have compared two distinct series of five years: the result, I have little doubt, would have been still more in my favour. But I did not think this a matter of sufficient importance to send for it to London: my case was perfectly clear."

not err much if I called you a thief."—"A thief! Did I ever steal any thing from you?"—"Yes, you have: it *'can need no proof,'* that, if your mouth were closed, some of the water, which now courses along your channels, would by filtration through the mountain, be found in mine."—"It is certainly very possible, that some fifteen or twenty drops might have reached you by this subterraneous filtration: but, see what a noble body of water I possess! and I employ the whole for the benefit of these parched and thirsty lands."—"What business, I ask, have you to flow at all? I existed for ages before any one thought of you: and I am by no means convinced, notwithstanding your *'imposing and devouring claims,'* that you confer any benefit whatever: your very colour and complexion are *'offensive ;'* and if *'I should go still deeper, I think it would not be difficult to point out some evils and important deficiencies, and more possibilities of evil, extant in and resulting from, and probabilities of great improvement lost and precluded by,'* such a shabby current as you are. Yet, little as I admire you, I had rather that you would become a feeder to me, than move in this unauthorized manner through the world alone."—"My good friend, it is quite impossible: some of my rivulets might possibly be turned, so as to fall into your channel: but there are copious branches, which, from the nature of the country, roll on in other directions, and cannot by any process be made to combine with yours: neither, as I believe, would you be willing to receive them. Whilst, therefore, we carry cheerfulness and delight on every side, let us be content to pursue our own channels in quietness and peace."

"It would well become us, my dear Wordsworth, to follow this good advice. Let the rivers of life flow without interruption through all climates; that every one, who thirsteth, may come to the waters; and that their benefits may be felt in every corner of the globe, among all nations, and languages, and people, and tongues. Happy will be the day, which shall witness this extension of blessings; and happy the instruments of such abundant good!"

We have just received a second pamphlet from the pen of Dr. Wordsworth, without a moment's time for weighing its contents. But we wish to pledge ourselves to a candid examination of it. This circumstance, and the length to which our review has already extended, will induce us to cut short the present inquiry with a brief notice of

a few points, on which we consider ourselves as already pledged to our readers.

The chief objection urged in the two pamphlets of Mr. Spry and Dr. Wordsworth, which we have undertaken to review (for we do not design to anticipate the further objections of the latter writer in his second work) is, that the Bible Society injures that of Bartlett's Buildings. Now, we think it not difficult to shew that the overt act of rivalry charged upon the Bible Society is falsely charged.

The overt act of rivalry towards the Bartlett's Buildings' Society, which has been repeatedly charged upon the new institution, is that of resolving to publish an edition of the Scriptures in Welsh immediately after a like resolution of the other society was carried. Now, if printing in the same language with the Bartlett's Buildings' Society is to be interpreted into an act of rivalry, then let the English presses of Oxford and Cambridge give their implements to the moles and bats, lest their sister of London look green. We had before thought it rather the reproach than the honour of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, that when she had supplicants in all languages clamouring for Bibles, she listened to so very few. But we now perceive that they were supplicating for their own ruin. Her favours would have been injuries. Her few hundreds of books would have stifled in the birth as many thousands; her lean kine have devoured the fat; and districts would have been contending for a single volume, where now every man has one in his possession.—But how is the accusation of rivalry proved? In 1799 the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge published an edition of the Welsh Bible. No sooner was the precious volume carried into the Welsh mountains, than thousands of competitors started up to grasp it, to carry it to their cabins, and there to devour the intelligence from heaven. The volume was to



them almost like a new revelation, thirty years having elapsed since the former edition was printed. They beheld it as the Magi beheld the star, and eagerly followed it as their guide to heaven.—This edition was soon sold off, and the Welsh applied to the society for another. Four tedious years passed by. The application was reiterated; and the society at length, in March 1805, resolved on another edition. It appears, however, from the last Report of the society, that this edition, though resolved on in March 1805, in 1809 was not yet issued. But in the mean time the destitute condition of the Welsh had attracted the notice and excited the compassion of the Bible Society, who as early as Sept. 3, 1804, soon after they had formed themselves into an institution, and six months before any similar purpose on the part of the Bartlett's Buildings' Society was heard of, resolved to publish the desired work. Certain difficulties, almost inherent in a new institution, checked their design, and they were unable till Dec. 9, 1805, nearly eight months after a similar order had been passed by the Bartlett's Buildings' Society, to pass their final resolution for proceeding with the work. And yet this work was not only completed before that of the old institution, but a second large edition had been printed and distributed, by the Bible Society, before a single Bible from the sister society had reached Wales. Even these two editions, however, will prove insufficient for the demand in Wales. We ourselves have heard an eye-witness describe the emotion with which the sacred volume was received there. Far from being satiated with the contributions formerly sent from the Bartlett's Buildings' Society, when the arrival of the cart was announced which carried the first sacred load, the Welsh peasants went out in crowds to meet it; welcomed it as the Israelites did the ark of old; drew it into the town; and eagerly bore off every

copy as rapidly as they could be dispersed. The young people were to be seen consuming the whole night in reading it. Labourers carried it with them to the field, that they might enjoy it during the intervals of their labour, and lose no opportunity of becoming acquainted with its sacred truths. The barrenness and desolation of their plains is forgotten. They are casting their characteristic pride at the foot of the Cross. By these, and by the truly apostolical exertions of the Bishop of St. David's, the good seed is scattered on these inhospitable mountains, and promises a glorious harvest to God and to their country.—Now we would fain persuade ourselves that those who are fond of contemplating this act as an act merely of rivalry on the part of the Bible Society, are not acquainted with these circumstances. We are confounded at the narrowness of those officers of a Spanish monarch, who suffered their master to perish rather than violate a rule of etiquette: and shall we be clamouring for all the punctilios of the drawing-room, when the salvation of a nation is at stake? Is a whole people to starve for lack of the Bread of Life for years, that the Bartlett's Buildings' Society may enjoy its unenvied precedency? One would think that men who breathe the atmosphere of a room where the good have for a century assembled to distribute the word of God, would be persons of a different temper; that they would rejoice to see new streams springing up in the wilderness, and new deserts beginning to blossom like the rose. Is it possible for any one to contemplate the good that may have arisen from the distribution by the Bible Society, of, we believe, 40,000 copies of the word of life among the Welsh, while not a single copy was to be obtained from any other quarter, and yet not rejoice in the contemplation? If it be, we must say, that we cannot envy the texture of that man's mind. Let him, if he will, attribute the printing and the distri-

bution of these Bibles to rivalry; still, if by any means Christ be preached, and his salvation be made known, therein he ought to rejoice. How many, during the years 1806, 7, 8, and 9, may have passed into eternity, whose path thither has been brightened by the light from heaven shed on it through the medium of the Bible Society, but whose course might have closed in utter darkness, had they been forced to depend on the faint and tardy efforts of the Bartlett's Buildings' Society! Let this single consideration silence the unreasonable, we had almost said the wicked, clamour which has been raised against an act that partakes more of the character of the divine beneficence, than any, perhaps, which a preceding century had produced.

A second point which we think may be shewn is, that the Bible Society has in more than one way a tendency to assist the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

Many, as Mr. Dealtry remarks, excited by the novelty and attractions of the new society, would feel it their duty to contribute to that which was peculiarly the society of their church. Many, first taught by this society what are the spiritual wants of their fellow-men, will rush in to fill up every channel by which the word of God may be circulated. Many, first roused to a sense of the supreme importance of religion by this society (and its annual meetings are well calculated to accomplish this end), will eagerly lend themselves to assist, by every method, in diffusing the knowledge of that word of which they themselves have learned the value. But the influence of the new society upon the interests of the old will be also of a more direct nature. It will not only open, by its example, a wider field of enterprise and usefulness; but it will tend to rouse the Bartlett's Buildings' Society to exertions more worthy of its constitution, its members, its means, and its objects. Let the society be worthy of itself, and

it will never want members. As certain bodies put into rapid motion begin to attract the surrounding objects, so this society in its more accelerated progress, would prove a source of powerful attraction to numbers; and hundreds of the doubtful and wavering would fall into its train. Let the society rise to its proper eminence, and its means will be abundant.—We do not hesitate to say, that he who kindles a spirit of vigour in institutions such as these, is their greatest benefactor. In contributing *his* mite, he “gives more than they all,” for he gives that which calls down the blessing of God, and which deserves and conciliates the support of all good men.

But, for our own parts, we are disposed to go farther, and to maintain, that, without some great improvement of spirit, some increase of activity, in the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, the prosperity of the new institution would not be dearly purchased even by the decay of the old.

According to the avowal of one of their warmest advocates, Mr. Spry, such is the “unobtrusiveness” of the society, that multitudes are ignorant even of its existence. Now, to be “obtrusive” is, as we conceive, to thrust ourselves into situations where we should not be. But where is the spot to which, if possible, the name and the influence of this society should not reach? Should not its report go forth into all nations? Should even the last points of habitable existence, were such an extension of it practicable, be hid from the light and heat thereof? Is it not designed to become the visitant of every region, and the citizen of the world? Should not the benighted nations look to this, as to the great source of light; as that couch from which their Sun is to “arise with healing in his wings?” Call it not, then, “unobtrusiveness:” it is inertness, drowsiness: it is being like the gods of Epicurus, slumbering when the concerns of a whole universe are at stake.



But shall we be told, that all this is the language of enthusiasm, of men demanding impossibilities; that the Bartlett's Buildings' Society has exhibited as much energy as could be expected in any body of men associated for such an object? Then we reply, Cast your eyes upon the Bible Society; read over the catalogue of the countries it has visited. See if the scene of the day of Pentecost is not in a degree re-acted by human agents; and if almost every people do not hear the glad tidings of salvation published in their own language. Go, in particular, to their annual meeting. Behold the tribute of gratitude which the most distant nations lay at their feet. See what an energy is darted through the whole mass of contributors. See, as in other ages, all who believe "of one mind;" and that mind, like that of their Great Master, an universal impulse to do good;—all consecrated to one great object; all, like Asdrubal, devoting themselves and their children, to an eternal war against ignorance and vice, and to the eternal maintenance of the true religion.

Upon this subject we cannot speak with calmness; because the feelings with which we ourselves have more than once been touched, as spectators of this scene, revive as we write, and compel us to commend to our countrymen this glorious institution, and to summon the sister society to a like tone of feeling and action.

But, lest we should be thought to have no facts on which to ground our opinion of the necessity of the new institution, and our dissent from the allegations of Mr. Spry and others respecting the competency of those already in existence, for all purposes, foreign as well as domestic, we will detain our readers, only while we mention one circumstance, in addition to what we have already stated respecting the Welsh Bible. It is a circumstance, however, which speaks volumes. The *only* edition of the Scriptures in a foreign lan-

guage (we will say nothing now of Ireland) which this society has ever produced, was an edition of 10,000 Arabic Testaments, printed near a century ago—namely, in 1720. But although the Arabic language is more extensively read than perhaps any other language in the world, and the sphere of distribution for these Testaments was therefore very large, yet, so slow has been that distribution, that a considerable number lay rotting, a few years back, in the cellars of the society. We hesitate not to affirm, that, in the space of five years, the British and Foreign Bible Society has done five times as much to make the word of God known in foreign nations, as the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has done in one hundred years. This society has much time to redeem, and many breaches to repair. God give them grace to arise and shake themselves from the dust, and put on the garments of activity and holiness! It is with sincere pleasure we have observed some recent symptoms of such a revival; and in our last number we have recorded some resolutions of the society, which we trust will be the commencement of a new era of well-regulated zeal and judicious exertion.

But, after all, it is not sufficient that fresh activity and energy should be infused into this society, unless the spirit in which it acts be that of Christian forbearance, moderation, and charity. The spirit of such an institution is of the first moment, as it is that mainly which, in the first instance, attracts subscribers, and afterwards governs the proceedings of those who subscribe. Now we suspect that for some years the spirit of this society has been such that, although many of the most venerable names in the kingdom are amongst its members, many individuals of equal pretensions have been unwilling to join it. It will be remembered, that a few years since a clergyman, to whom the most unequivocal testimony was

borne by characters of the first eminence and virtue in the kingdom, was rejected by the society, simply, as it appeared, on the ground of his being recommended by two gentlemen whose piety, for we believe they had no other tangible fault, had rendered them obnoxious to certain individuals who usually attend the society's board. This act of rejection could be meant only to stigmatize these gentlemen, and to repel from their ranks that body of clergy whom the world strangely endeavour to discredit by the appellation of the *evangelical* clergy. Now for such an act, and it is by no means a solitary one, the society must expect to suffer. Is it to be endured, that a society instituted for the general purpose of propagating Christian knowledge, should stoop to meddle with the prejudices and jealousies of individuals, and should, at their bidding, issue its ban against a large body of ministers, and attempt to stamp the mark of the beast on their foreheads? But from a view of some of the transactions of the society, to say nothing of some of its publications, this might easily be shewn to be the case. This class of ministers, as well as those of the laity who embrace similar views of religion, have for a long period seen their intentions suspected, their zeal discredited, and their very presence viewed with distrust, by the governing party in the society: and if they obtained admission into it at all, it was obviously because they were not yet known to be of what is called the *evangelical* school. And what was the consequence? That which might be expected: many ceased to attend, or to interfere, where their services were considered as intrusive or dangerous; while others, not yet on the society's list, feared to propose themselves, with the precedent of rejection hanging over their heads. Now this spirit, we are bold to say, has materially injured the society. The *evangelical* clergy, as they are

called, have been the topic of much discussion in this work. We have fairly canvassed their faults, and as liberally, we hope, commended their excellencies. We wish it to be characteristic of our work, to have

——— "Nothing extenuated,  
Nor ought set down in malice."

Our testimony, therefore, to the value of such men as compose the main part of this body to any religious institution, ought to be regarded. We firmly believe, that a large incorporation of them with the present acting managers of the Bartlett's Buildings' Society, would have given an efficiency to that institution which it now wants. If the spirit, however, of the institution is not corrected; if individuals are to be subtracting the weights and powers from the great wheels of the machine, to work their own petty levers; if the society is to set the stamp of intolerance upon every copy of the Bible it issues; if it is to forswear all zeal itself, and fulminate bulls of exclusion against the zealous; we sincerely think that the welfare of the new society "will not be dearly purchased even by the decay of the old."—But we hope better things of this ancient institution. We trust that grey hairs will bring wisdom with them. We trust that she will rejoice to lean upon the crutch which the new society supplies; that she will feel for it as a daughter; that she will embrace it in her somewhat withered arms; and that, gaining in vigour what she yields in respectability, they may run hand in hand their triumphant career; "provoke" one another to nothing but "good works;" and, wherever they appear, be in reality, what the twin stars were in fable, signs of peace, and love, and joy.

——— Quorum simul alba nautis  
Stella refulsit,

Defluit saxis agitata humor:  
Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes,  
Et minax (quod sic voluere) ponte  
Unda recumbit,



## LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE,

&amp;c. &amp;c.

## GREAT BRITAIN.

In the press: The sixth Part of Mr. Nicholl's History of Leicestershire, which was nearly destroyed by the fire at that gentleman's printing-office, together with the remaining portions of the work;—A new edition, with a new volume, of Hanman's Pulpit Assistant, containing 250 Skeletons of Sermons, in four vols. small 12mo.;—Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell: a Poem, by the Rev. S. Elsdale, Curate of Surfleet, near Spalding;—A new edition of the Sermons of President Davies;—A work on Scripture Biography, by Mr. Toy;—A new edition of Bishop Earle's Microcosmography; and of Brand's Observations on Popular Antiquities;—and The present Picture of New South Wales, by D. D. Mann.

Preparing for the press: A Vindication of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in Answer to Dr. Wordsworth's Letter to Lord Teignmouth, by the Rev. William Dealtry, M. A., Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Bristol;—A work on the English Language, by Mr. Grant, author of Institutes of Latin Grammar;—A treatise on the doctrine of Fluxions, by Mr. W. Moore, of Woolwich;—A new edition of Dugdale's Warwickshire, with additions, in three vols. folio;—A new work on Conveyancing, by Mr. Turner, of the Middle Temple;—and Chronological Memoirs of Mohammedan History, from its earliest period, by Major Price, of the Bombay Establishment.

Messrs. Sharp and Co. having lately advertised a new edition of the volume of Essays by Mrs. H. More, her booksellers, Messrs. Cadell and Davies, have informed the public, that the publication is not only wholly unauthorised by her, but against her consent; she having given notice, many years ago, in the preface to her collected Works, that she had suppressed those essays, as a juvenile production; and having also treated the same subjects more in detail, in her Strictures on Female Education.

The first volume of the Theological Works of Mr. A. Maclean, of Edinburgh, has been reprinted, and is now ready for delivery. Vols. V. and VI. (the Paraphrase and Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews) are put to press. The whole, making eight or nine vols. 12mo., will be published as speedily as possible.

Mr. Baynes, in Paternoster-Row, is about

to publish an extensive and valuable collection of books, both English and foreign, consisting of Divinity, Ecclesiastical History, Sermons, Dictionaries, Lexicons, Grammars, &c. &c.

The Savilian electors have appointed Mr. Regaud, of Exeter college, to be Savilian professor of geometry at Oxford, in the room of Dr. Robertson, promoted to the professorship of astronomy, vacant by the death of Dr. Hornsby.

The prizes at Oxford have this year been adjudged as follows—viz.: English Essay, to Mr. Whately, B. A. of Oriel; Latin Essay, to Mr. Miller, B. A. Worcester; Latin Verses, to Mr. Coleridge, Corpus Christi; and English Verse, to Mr. Chinaery, of Christ-Church.

The installation of Lord Grenville, as chancellor of the university of Oxford, which occupied the whole of the week beginning on the 2d instant, appears to have been a very splendid spectacle. It does not suit our plan or our limits to enter into any account of the various ceremonials employed, and fêtes given, and sights exhibited, on this occasion. We were gratified to hear, that the noble part which his lordship had taken in the Abolition of the Slave Trade formed a prominent feature in all the laudatory speeches and poems which were recited in honour of his appointment.

At the examination of the students of the East-India college at Hertford, in May last, the following prizes were presented, by the Honourable Chairman of the East-India Company, in the presence of the college committee, principal, professors, and masters, to the undermentioned students, to whom the same had been awarded by the college council, for their superior attainments, in the several branches of study—viz. Books.

For their acquirements in Sanscrit; to Messrs. Stuart, and Swetenham.—For Bengalee; to Messrs. Richardson, Hobbouse, and Wilkinson.—For Persian; to Messrs. Lindsay, Clive, Norris.—For Hindustani; to Messrs. Macleod, Vaughan, Norris.—For Oriental writing; Mr. I. A. Pringle.—Mathematics; Messrs. Chastenay, Richardson, Macleod, Fraser.—Classics; Messrs. I. A. Pringle, Chastenay: Norris, Babington, junior class.—Political economy; Mr. Stuart.—Ditto and Modern History; Mr. Wyuch.—Modern History; Messrs. Hobbouse: Valphy, junior class.—For Law; to Messrs.

Stuart, Rooke, and Glynn.—Theology; Mr. Evan Baillic.—French; Messrs. Traill, 1st prize; Chastenay, 2d do.—Drawing; Messrs. Waters, 1st prize; Stuart, 2d do.

Messrs. Lewis, Traill, Sutherland, Chastenay, W. Hudleston, Wynch, Hobhouse, Macleod, Pigeon, were reported as having highly distinguished themselves.

Messrs. Swetenham, Norris, Glynn, Dalzell, Biscoe, Dick, Gardiner, Bax, passed the examination with credit.

In the month of May, a large company of agriculturists and breeders of sheep, from most parts of the kingdom, assembled on Fair-mile Farm, near Cobham, the seat of Lord Somerville, to examine the flock of Merino sheep, imported some years ago by his lordship, improved by a careful selection under his own immediate care, and now, for the advantage of the country at large, offered for sale. The ewes with their lambs, and the rams, were put up singly, and were purchased

with avidity at wonderful prices. The correct result of the two day's sale was as follows:

	<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
124 Merino ewes with their lambs sold for	4736	12	6
30 Merino ewes .....	992	5	0
40 Merino ewe-hogs (or yearling ewes)	773	17	0
20 Merino rams .....	851	3	0
14 Merino yearling rams ....	806	3	0
Thus 228 Merinos sold for no less than	9210	3	6

The distribution of so great a number of Spanish sheep, of the pure Merino breed, by his Majesty's annual sale, and former and recent donations, and by this sale of Lord Somerville's, and others among the most careful and experienced breeders of cattle throughout the British island, cannot fail of soon producing a beneficial effect on our staple manufacture of broad cloth.

## LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

### THEOLOGY.

Sermons by Samuel Horsley, LL.D. F.R.S. F.S.A. late Lord Bishop of St. Asaph. 2 vols. 8vo. 1*l.* 1*s.*

Two Sermons on the Unity of the Church; with copious Illustrations. By the Author of "The Spirit of Religious Controversy." Being the first volume of Sermons on various Religious and Moral Subjects, for all the Sundays of the Pentecost. 8*s.*

An Address from a Clergyman to his Parishioners. By Richard Valpy, D.D. Rector of Stradishall, Suffolk. 5*s.* 6*d.*

On the Authority of the Church and the Holy Scriptures; an Address to the Roman Catholics of England, occasioned by a Sermon of the Rev. Dr. Milner's, lately preached at Birmingham. By the Rev. Thomas Le Mesurier, M.A. 5*s.*

Introductory Key to the First Four Books of Moses. By the late James Morrison. No. VII. being the last. 6*d.*

Hymns for Infant Minds. By the Authors of "Original Poems for Infant Minds," "Rhymes for the Nursery," &c. 1*s.* 6*d.*

Twenty-one short Sermons, calculated for Children, and explanatory of the essential Doctrines of Christianity, with a View to an early and adequate Observance of religious Principles and moral Duties. By a Lady. 2 small vols. Price, together, sewed, 2*s.* 6*d.*

Hebrew Criticism and Poetry, By George Somers Clarke, D.D. Vicar of Waltham, Essex. 8vo. 15*s.*

A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, at Westminster, on 30th January, 1810. By William Lort, Lord Bishop of Bristol. 2*s.*

### MISCELLANEOUS.

Yuli, the African. In six Cantos. 4*s.*

The Associate Minstrels. Post 8vo. 7*s.*

Supplement to the Life and Writings of the Hon. Henry Home, of Kames. 4to. 6*s.*; large paper, 10*s.* 6*d.*

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

### YEARLY MEETING OF QUAKERS.

THE yearly meeting of the Quakers took place in London in the last week of May. The Epistle from that meeting to the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings has since been

published; and as it contains some observations which are applicable, not to Quakers only, but to Christians generally, we will transcribe them for the benefit of our readers. Nor ought the objections we may feel to the erroneous views entertained by this body to



prevent our emulation of that divine love and Christian moderation, that self-dedication and lowliness of heart, which it recommends to its members.

"Dear Friends,—Keep in view the two great commandments of perpetual obligation; the love of God, and the love of our neighbour. The latter is the ground of our Christian discipline; and the former is the life of our spiritual worship. And we are persuaded that if, through the redeeming power of the Lord, and by continuing in his fear and under his guidance, we become settled in these holy dispositions;—if, to use other words, with gratitude, watchfulness, and lowliness of mind, we improve these holy gifts of grace, they will never be taken from us; but will remain and expand, when the veil of flesh shall be removed, and a nearer access be opened to the fountain of love, in a blissful immortality.

"At these annual assemblies, we have too often occasion of grief, in hearing of defects which do not comport with a people professing to be spiritually minded. Yet we are not disposed to enumerate them now; though we can readily trace their origin. But let us remind every one amongst us, that it is better to be willing to trace, each the origin of his own defect, than to compose his mind by considering it a small one. The more we can abide under a sense of our own wants, the readier and the more earnestly shall we apply for help to Him upon whom help is laid. And probably the natural unwillingness there is in the creature to feel in itself a testimony to its own unworthiness, is one great reason why no more are raised up as testimony-bearers to the Lord's all-sufficiency and goodness."

"It is not easy to compress the wants of the church in one comprehensive term; but it seems as if one of the watch-words, peculiarly worthy of attention in the present day were, *Dedication*. Remember, dear visited friends, that when Christ invites you to submit to his yoke, he declares it to be easy; while the yoke of disobedience is known to be heavy." "Brethren, Sisters, 'ye are called unto liberty,' even 'the glorious liberty of the children of God.' It is with thankfulness that we perceive, that very many of our beloved young friends, of both sexes, seem sensible that the Lord's preparing hand is upon them. How then do we desire that these may persevere in the path of dedication; yea, that in their love and service, they may 'go on from strength to strength;' until, having fulfilled their due measure of suffering, every one of them may 'appear,' with final acceptance, 'before God in Zion.'"

"We have received at this time epistles from all the North American yearly meetings; in which, besides the general vigilance over the welfare of the society, we find a continuance of attention to the same objects of more general concern, which we mentioned last year; namely, the state of the black people still held as slaves, and the measures employed for civilizing the Indian natives.

"Now, dear friends, we would mention one subject which at this time has been under our notice; a caution to all, to use moderation in their manner of living; and in this way to seek relief from the increasing expense of the times in which we live, rather than by engaging in more extensive, and often hazardous schemes in trade. By these latter means the mind becomes encumbered, and unfitted for religious service, yea often for religious thought, and for breathing daily after the spiritual riches, which are to be enjoyed in close communion with God. And let us beseech you to consider, how distant from the state which endeavours to stand resigned to give up all, if required, is that state which indulges itself in ease to the full extent of its power, or is endeavouring by multiplied adventures in trade, to acquire that power, which it covets for the purpose of worldly enjoyment. We believe, however, and we are glad in believing, that there are numbers who act upon sounder principles than these; who knowing, as saith the apostle, that "the fashion of this world passeth away," are really desirous of using "this world as not abusing it." These, we would encourage to hold on in the way cast up before them, trusting in the Lord, who hath declared that all things necessary will be given to those who seek first His kingdom. Thus trusting, and endeavouring to apply to him in secret supplication, in the difficulties that must in a state of probation be the lot of all, we may humbly hope that, in our several proportions, we shall 'grow in the truth' individually; and that, coming up in our allotments in the church militant, our various meetings will also, whether more or less as to number, experience among them a 'growth in the truth.'

"But, dear friends, there is one attainment which, at this time, we are earnest to remind you of; an attainment without which, no other gift can be permanent and certain. We want to press on you the never ceasing duty of humility and lowliness of mind. Even our blessed Lord declared himself to be "meek and lowly in heart;" and can any one, expecting salvation by him, be exempt from the need of possessing the same holy temper? However great the talents with which he may have endowed us by nature,

or however he may replenish our souls with the more excellent gifts of his Holy Spirit, still we have nothing which we have not received; and we can have no sound reason for setting at nought the least of our brethren—for whom, let us remember, equally as for us, Christ died. Let us then, dear friends, be willing to examine ourselves, and know whether we are indeed humble followers of a lowly-minded, though omnipotent Saviour. If we feel a deficiency of humility, let us pray for an increase, and for assistance to check the springings up of its dreadful opposite, pride; and if we are not without some ground of hope that we are endowed, in good degree, with an humble heart, we shall certainly be encouraged still to supplicate for its continuance. Finally, dear friends, whether, with the beloved disciple, we address you as fathers, or as young men, whether, without regard of sex or station, our love in Christ now salutes the aged or the rising generation; remember, that it is "the meek whom the Lord will teach his way:" and thus taught, and receiving with unreserving heart, the holy doctrine, "Grace and peace" will be multiplied, "from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

#### EDINBURGH BIBLE SOCIETY.

This society has been recently instituted—under the patronage of Lord Cathcart, as president; and Lord Calthorpe and others, as vice-presidents—with the same objects, and for the same purposes, as the British and Foreign Bible Society; being to act either in concert with it, or separately, as circumstances may require. The first Report of the proceedings of the Committee of this society has reached us, from which it appears that they have been active, both in raising funds, and in distributing Bibles. Danish, French, and Dutch Testaments, have been given to the different prisoners of war confined in Scotland. The different hospitals about the Metropolis, as well as poor families, have been supplied with English Bibles; and the wants of the army and navy have been particularly attended to. Means have been taken for furnishing the Scriptures, in the German, Dutch, and Danish languages, at reduced prices, to foreign seamen visting Leith: and the society has undertaken, for the British and Foreign Bible Society, the task of distributing the Gaelic Scriptures. A donation of 800*l.* has been sent to the British and Foreign Bible Society; and one of 200*l.* to the Hibernian Society: 200*l.* have also been voted to promote the translating of the Scriptures into the Oriental languages; and 100*l.* in aid of the Icelandic translation. The

money raised during the year amounts to upwards of 1700*l.*

#### THE POPE.

The following account of the Pope's imprisonment is said to have been received from Paris:—"The Pope's confinement in the fortress of Savona has been rendered so severe, that even the servants who attended him from Italy are denied access to him. His Holiness subsists on the common gaol allowance, having refused to receive a monthly sum of money offered to him by Buonaparte."

#### MISSIONS of the UNITED BRETHREN.\*

##### CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

At Gnadenthall, during the year 1808, 78 persons have become candidates for baptism, and 35 for the Lord's supper; of these, 50 have been baptized, and 16 admitted to the communion. The Hottentot congregation consists of 121 communicants, 47 candidates, 96 baptized adults (not yet communicants), 164 baptized children, 116 candidates for baptism, in all, 544 persons, being 76 more than last year. The settlement contains altogether 791 persons, dwelling in 183 houses. Gruenekloof, another settlement, contains 105 inhabitants. From the journal of proceedings at this place we shall abstract at present but one passage.

"We celebrated Christmas with hearts filled anew with joy and gratitude towards our incarnate God and Saviour, for his infinite love in coming down to dwell amongst us. An unusual number of strangers came to partake in the festival solemnities, and at the close of the year the crowd was greater than was ever known in this place. Several so-called Christians, especially among the young people, behaved so improperly, that we were greatly disturbed. Other strangers, who were better disposed, expressed their indignation at it, and said: 'We ought indeed to be ashamed before your Hottentots, that people, calling themselves Christians, can act in such a manner.' Though we had made every possible arrangement to accommodate the white visitors, yet a great many were obliged to seek lodgings with the Hot-

\* The total number of Missionaries, male and female, employed on the missions of the United Brethren about the end of 1809, was 151, viz. 31 in the Danish West Indian islands, 14 in Antigua, six in St. Kitt's, three in Jamaica, two in Barbadoes, 19 in South America, 17 in North America, 25 in Labrador, 18 in Greenland, and 14 at the Cape of Good Hope, besides four persons on their journey to different missions.



tentots. Some of the unruly people were refused admission by the Hottentots, who said, that though they were poor, yet they would not be paid for suffering their domestic peace to be destroyed. The Missionaries were at last obliged to give an exhortation in the church, and protest against the disorders committed; at which a farmer grew angry, and said to one of our Hottentot women: "You contemptible wretches want to make others believe, that we only came hither to seduce you;" adding many very violent in-

vectives. The Hottentot replied: "Well, Baas, I am glad to find that you understood our teacher, when he spoke of your behaviour; he only said what was strictly true."

"The Lord was however with us, and did not suffer us to lose that comfort, which He grants to all who seek His face, by the forgiveness of their sins, through the merits of His precious blood; and we have the confident hope, that He will continue to be with, and bless us, in the New Year."

(To be continued.)

## VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

### CONTINENTAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE most prominent circumstance in the occurrences of the month, is the final annexation of Holland to France. The decree of union is dated the 9th of July. It directs the various administrations, as well as the custom-houses, to continue as they now are till the first of January 1811, when a complete assimilation to those of France is to take place, and the custom-houses on the frontier to be removed. Holland is then to have six senators, six deputies to the council of state, twenty-five deputies to the legislative body, and two judges in the court of cassation. In the mean time, the Duke of Placentia (Le Brun) is to superintend the affairs of Holland. Amsterdam is to be the third city of the empire. On the 1st of January also, the present taxes are to cease:—"the country," says the decree, "shall be eased of that burden, and the imposts put on the same footing as for the rest of the empire." Whether the Dutch will have cause to consider this substitution as any relief, even if it were unaccompanied, as it will not be, by the law of conscription, those will more than doubt who have read a recent publication on the subject of the French finances. "The colonial produce actually in Holland shall remain in the hands of the owners, on paying a duty of fifty per cent. *ad valorem*." This tax, of course, is charged on the value of the article, after the heavy duties and other expenses attending its importation have been paid; that is to say, on the value of the article in the market of Holland; so that it will probably amount to a tax of one hundred per cent. on the first cost. The most iniquitous part of this decree remains to be stated. "Only one third of the present amount of interest on the public debt shall be carried to the account of expenditure for 1810. The interest of the debt for 1808 and 1809; not yet paid, shall be re-

duced to one-third, and charged on the budget of 1810." That is to say, the interest of three years, now due, shall be paid with the interest of one year; and as the same rule, we apprehend, will be followed in all future payments, it is in fact robbing the public creditor, by one sweeping sentence, of two-thirds of his property. It would be difficult to point out, in the page of history, a more barefaced violation of faith in any government. It is an act of swindling and robbery united.

The reasons given by Bonaparte's minister for foreign affairs, the Duke of Cadore (Champagny), as he is called, for this formal annexation of Holland, are of a most convenient description. They would suit, with a slight change, the circumstances of any state which he might wish to unite to his empire. They tend fully to confirm all that has been alleged respecting the views of universal dominion cherished by the government of France.—The union of Belgium with France has destroyed the independence of Holland. Her commerce is ruined, and her cities falling to decay. She is sunk under the weight of her public debt, and the enormity of her contributions; and yet the necessary expenses of the government require that this burden should be greatly augmented. A provisional government will only be prolonging her agony. Her incorporation with the great empire can alone restore her to prosperity. Such an union is for the interest, nay, for the salvation, of Holland: "she ought to be associated in our blessings, as she has been in our calamities." "Holland is in fact a shoot from the French territory; a portion of soil necessary to complete the form of the empire. To become full master of the Rhine, your Majesty must advance to the Zuyder Sea." "To leave the mouths of your rivers in the possession of strangers, would confine your power to an ill-limited

monarchy, instead of erecting an imperial throne; it would be tantamount to submitting your laws to them." "The annexation of Holland is still necessary to complete the system of the empire." The astonished Scheldt, he adds, swells with pride to behold twenty vessels of the first rate protecting its shores; but the great designs of France cannot be fully accomplished but by the union of Holland. It is necessary to complete so astonishing a creation. By calling into action the maritime resources of Holland, a fleet of forty sail of the line, and a great number of troops, shall be assembled in the Scheldt and the Texel, to dispute with Britain the sovereignty of the seas, and repel its unjust claims. The interests, not of France alone, but of all Europe, call for this union. Europe applies to France to repair her marine, and combat Britain on her own element. In short, this union augments the empire, and adds to its security and to its wealth. "It is the first, but a necessary step towards the restoration of your navy: in fact, it is the heaviest blow which your Majesty could inflict on England."

Before this decree was issued, King Louis had abdicated the throne of Holland in favour of his son. This disposition, however, is reversed by Bonaparte's decree of union. Louis has withdrawn himself from Holland, and it seems has retired to Westphalia. A large body of French troops has entered that devoted country, in order to prevent any resistance to the new arrangement.

Considerable tumults have taken place at Stockholm, under an idea that the Crown Prince of Sweden, who died suddenly about two months ago, had been murdered. There does not appear to be any foundation for this idea. One nobleman, however, has fallen a victim to the popular fury; and farther commotions were apprehended.

Great uneasiness is said to have been excited among the Swedes, by an apprehension that it forms one of the designs of Bonaparte to annex Sweden to the crown of Denmark. All the prejudices and long-rooted antipathies of the Swedes would be in arms against such a project.

Of the war which is carrying on between the Russians and the Turks, we know little with any certainty. It appears to be conducted with various fortune. We heard a little time ago of a severe defeat sustained by the Russians. We now hear of a great battle lost by the Turks, near Silistria, on the

right bank of the Danube, and of their army having fallen back to Adrianople.

In the Spanish Peninsula, things remain in the same state in which they have been for the last two or three months. The French, under Massena, had commenced the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo; and although the garrison appeared to make a gallant defence, no hope was entertained that it would long hold out. Lord Wellington had determined not to advance to its relief;—a circumstance which, we fear, may be considered as strongly indicative of the relative superiority of the French force. The united army of Great Britain and Portugal is said to occupy a very strong position. This of itself, however, does not justify the hope of permanently preserving the peninsula from the dominion of the French, against a force decidedly superior in numbers, and superior also in quality, not indeed to the British troops, but to all else who are opposed to them.

Little progress has yet been made in the siege of Cadiz. The town is said to abound with all the necessaries of life, so that there is no hope of reducing it by famine; and the garrison is considered to be fully equal to its defence. The extraordinary Cortez have been summoned, by the council of Regency, to meet in the Isle of Leon, in August. It is not very obvious what purpose this meeting is now intended to answer.

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

So much of the diplomatic correspondence between the American ambassadors and the courts of Great Britain and France, has recently been published in America, as leaves us in much less doubt than formerly respecting the probable issue of the pending negotiations. Mr. Pinckney, in a long and able letter addressed to the Marquis Wellesley, in the month of January last, enters into a history of Mr. Jackson's proceedings, and an exposition of the feelings which actuated his own government on that occasion, and communicates the wish of that Government that Mr. Jackson might be recalled, and some other channel of communication substituted, as no farther intercourse could be had with that gentleman. The whole affair wears a much more temperate and respectful aspect in the hands of Mr. Pinckney, than in those of Mr. Smith. Lord Wellesley's answer is dated the 14th of March. It is also a calm and temperate production. It expresses his Majesty's concern that the communication between the two countries should have been interrupted before he had any opportunity,



by interposing his authority, of shewing his invariable good-will to America. The usual course would have been, to complain to his Majesty, and desire redress. His Majesty, however, always disposed to pay attention to the wishes of friendly states, has directed the return of Mr. Jackson, although Mr. Jackson has given the most positive assurances that it was not his purpose to give any offence, and although his Majesty has not thought it right to mark with any expression of his displeasure the conduct of Mr. Jackson, whose integrity, zeal and abilities have long been distinguished, and who appears on this occasion to have committed no intentional offence. His Majesty has directed a person properly qualified to carry on the ordinary intercourse between the two governments, and, as a farther proof of his friendly disposition, he is ready to receive, with sentiments of undiminished amity, any communication the Government of the United States may deem beneficial to the mutual interests of both countries.

The correspondence with the French government is of a very different complexion indeed. The letters of Mr. Armstrong to Mr. Smith shew that his applications to the French government were treated with extraordinary neglect, and the consideration of them postponed on the most frivolous pretences. The unceremonious manner in which Bonaparte is disposed to treat America, is well exemplified by the following extract from one of these letters; it is dated April 16, 1810. "The John Adams being yet detained, I am able to inform you, that on the 11th instant the Emperor directed the sale of all the American vessels taken in the ports of Spain; and that the money arising therefrom should be placed in his private chest. He has also refused to give up the *Hero*" (a vessel employed by the American Government to bring the interest of the American funds to the continent), "and has ordered that the case be brought before the council of prizes, where condemnation necessarily awaits it." On its being announced to Mr. Armstrong that the Emperor had decided that the American property seized in the ports of Spain should be sold, but that the money arising therefrom should remain in depôt, he addressed a letter to the Duke of Cadore, in which he remonstrates, though in sufficiently measured terms, against this gross violation of public faith. The ground on which this measure is defended is, that the American Government had issued a decree excluding French ships from their ports, and forbidding Ame-

rican ships to trade to France. Mr. Armstrong maintains that America had a perfect right to pass such a law, which was a regulation merely municipal, for the purpose of protecting her own citizens from injury and insult; and he asks, can this be regarded as a legitimate cause of reprisal on the part of a power who makes it the first duty of a nation to defend their sovereignty, and who even denationalizes the ships of those who will not subscribe to this opinion? It having been alleged that the United States had no cause of complaint against France, Mr. Armstrong enters upon a detail of the numerous and aggravated injuries they had had to sustain; and then remarks, with more spirit than we have been accustomed to witness in communications with the French Government, "Surely, if it is the duty of the United States to resent the theoretical usurpations of the British Orders in Council, it cannot be less their duty to complain of the daily and practical outrages on the part of France!" Much more is said on this subject, to shew the iniquity, on the part of France, of the measure she has adopted and avowed, of seizing, with a view to retaliation, all American vessels within her reach, not only in French ports, but in all ports under the influence of France. But we presume that neither argument nor remonstrance will turn Bonaparte from his purpose. The property has found its way into his strong box; nor will all the eloquence of Mr. Armstrong be able to extract it.

Another letter from that gentleman to the Duke of Cadore states the fact, "that a number of American ships, coming directly from the United States to the port of Naples, under a promise of protection from his Majesty the King, have notwithstanding been seized, and their cargoes sold for the benefit of the fisc. Nor does the injury stop here. Though thus deprived of all means of subsistence themselves, the captains have been obliged to subsist the crews (amounting nearly to 300 men), and are now menaced with a farther exaction for port charges. This, in the strong language of the sufferers, is 'literally to strip them naked, and then demand from them the expense of doing so.'" Even this monstrous transaction provokes no strong language on the part of the ambassador. He requests, through the intervention of the Duke of Cadore, such correction of the evil as humanity and justice may conspire to dictate, and begs that at least means may be afforded the crews of returning to their own country!!

## GREAT BRITAIN.

## MR. COBBETT.

We briefly alluded in our last number to the conviction of this gentleman, as the author of a seditious libel. We will now resume the subject, and state a few particulars of the trial.

A mutiny had broken out among the local militia at Ely, on account of the stoppage of a part of their allowance for knapsacks. They surrounded their officers, and clamorously demanded the sum that had been deducted. The mutiny was suppressed by the arrival of some squadrons of the German Legion. Five of the ringleaders were tried, and sentenced to receive five hundred lashes each. A part of this punishment was inflicted, and a part remitted.

An account of the above transaction, extracted from the Courier, was placed as a motto to one of the numbers of Mr. Cobbett's Weekly Register, that of the 1st July, 1809; on which he proceeded thus to comment. "See the motto, English reader; see the motto; and then do pray recollect all that has been said about the way in which Bonaparte raises his soldiers. Well done, Lord Castlereagh: this is just what was thought your plan would produce. Well said, Mr. Huskisson: it was not without reason you dwelt on the great utility of *foreign* troops, whom Mr. Wardle thought of no utility at all. Poor gentleman! he little imagined how a great genius might find employment for such troops. He little imagined that they might be made the means of compelling Englishmen to submit to that sort of discipline which is so conducive to the producing in them a disposition to defend their country at the risk of their lives. Let Mr. Wardle look to my motto, and then say whether the German soldiers are of no use. *Five hundred lashes each!* Aye, that is right! flog them! flog them! flog them! They deserve it, and a great deal more. They deserve a flogging at every meal-time. Lash them daily, lash them duly." "What, shall the rascals dare to *mutiny*, and that too when the German Legion is so near at hand! Lash them, lash them, lash them! They deserve it. O yes; they merit a double-tailed cat. Base dogs! What, mutiny for the sake of *the price of a knapsack!* Lash them! Flog them! Base rascals! Mutiny for the price of a goat's skin; and then, upon the appearance of the *German soldiers*, they take a flogging as quietly as so many trunks of trees! I do not know what sort of a place Ely is; but I really should like to know

how the inhabitants looked one another in the face, while this scene was exhibiting in their town. I should like to have been able to see their faces, and to hear their observations to each other at the time. This occurrence at home will, one would hope, teach the loyal a little caution in speaking of the means which Napoleon employs (or, rather, which they say he employs) in order to get together, and to discipline, his Conscripts. There is scarcely any one of these loyal persons, who has not, at various times, cited the handcuffs, and other means of force, said to be used in drawing out the young men of France; there is scarcely any one of the loyal, who has not cited these means as a proof, a complete proof, that the people of France hate Napoleon and his government, assist with reluctance in his wars, and would fain see another revolution. I hope, I say, that the loyal will, hereafter, be more cautious in drawing such conclusions, now that they see that our 'gallant defenders' not only require physical restraint, in certain cases, but even a little blood from their backs, and that, too, with the aid and assistance of German troops. At any rate, every time they do in future burst out into execrations against the French, for suffering themselves to be chained together and forced at the point of the bayonet to do military duty, I shall just re-publish the passage which I have taken for a motto to the present sheet."

Lord Ellenborough, in his charge to the Jury, commented at considerable length on the passage now quoted. He observed, that every individual had a right to suggest alterations in laws, provided the suggestion were made in temperate and qualified terms. He may address himself to the sober reason of his country, and endeavour, through the people, to impress the parliament with the necessity of their being changed. If such a discussion were brought before a Jury, no Judge would ever recommend it to them to construe it a libel. The intention, as indicated by the language employed, was always the thing to be looked at. Otherwise a defendant might always say, "My mind was innocent, but my pen slipped: the libel was unguarded; acquit me." But here, he said, it was not one random expression, but a continuity of the same thought and expression, that was to be complained of; and from which no purpose but one could be inferred. It was calculated to generate distrust in the army. It tended to loosen all the links and ties of military subordination: and, under all the



circumstances, the intention to do so must be inferred. He plainly reproached the mutineers for submitting to be punished with arms in their hands, and the people of Ely for suffering the punishment to be inflicted. What he said respecting Bonaparte had the same tendency; that is, to injure the military service, and to hold up the government and constitution to contempt. "You will judge," said his Lordship to the Jury, "whether the words are such as might escape from a well-meaning man through haste, or whether they are the words of a man who wished to dissolve the union of the military, on which at all times, but especially at this, the safety of the kingdom rests. If this latter be the case, the defendant will deservedly fall under the description of a seditious person. In cases like the present, the law requires me to state my opinion to the Jury. I do pronounce this to be a most infamous and seditious libel."

The Jury, without retiring from the box, pronounced the defendant guilty.

Mr. Cobbett, when brought up for judgment, said he did not intend to offer any thing in defence. On the 9th instant, the sentence of the Court was pronounced by Mr. Justice Grose, as follows: that Mr. Cobbett should pay a fine to the King of 1000*l.*; should be imprisoned for two years in Newgate; and at the end of that time should enter into recognizances to keep the peace for seven years, himself in 3000*l.*, and two sureties in 1000*l.* each. The printer, Mr. Hansard, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment, and to enter into recognizances to keep the peace, himself in 400*l.* and two sureties in 200*l.* each. The publishers, Messrs. Budd and Bagshaw, were each sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

In addressing Mr. Cobbett, the Judge, among other things, observed, that he had been convicted of a most foul and wicked libel—a libel, the tendency of which was, to create dislike of their duty in the Local Militia of the country, and disgust to our service in the foreigners employed therein, and through them to bring disgrace on the Government, and to paralyze the energies of the State, and that at a season when an enemy the most ferocious was at the very moment threatening our shores; an enemy whose military government had laid prostrate the surrounding States, and who marked his way with spoliation and plunder; yet this was the enemy who was stated by the prisoner to use his soldiers better than the soldiers of this country were used, and whose Government was compared with the Government of this country, and asserted by him to afford more

comforts and protection to its soldiery than were afforded to the soldiers of this country. The malignancy of this poison was therefore considerably increased by the time and the season when it was spread throughout the nation.—He neither did nor could exculpate himself in the eyes of the Jury, and they decided upon him with proofs but too convincing of the foulness and wickedness of his guilt.—If it could not be imputed to him that his objects were to distract the Government, and to embarrass the State, then it could not be denied that objects, if not as dangerous, at least as base, could not be removed from his intentions, namely, that of writing libels for the degenerate purposes of base and unworthy lucre and profit. This, then, in itself, was an offence of the deepest dye, and such as the Court was imperiously called upon to visit with a heavy hand. It was much to be lamented that a man who has had the experience of the defendant, should, after all that passes in life so constantly before his eyes, grow worse, and as he increases in years, increase in malignity. It was also lamentable that the numerous examples made of libellers had no effect upon him; but, that knowing the fatal consequences of such conduct, he still perseveres in spreading the poison of most destructive malignancy through the nation. A check must be put to such mischief, the State must be governed, the army must be satisfied that their fellow citizens are satisfied with them, the foreigners in our service must not be traduced whilst they are labouring in common with the whole of our military system to support the dignity and protect the safety of the Empire, and the military system must not be moved to a disgust of the service in which they are employed.—For these reasons the Court holds itself called upon to exert its authority this day.

#### SIR F. BURDETT.

The trial of the actions brought by Sir F. Burdett against the Speaker, and others concerned in his imprisonment, is put off till November. In the mean time, he appears to be endeavouring to regain some of the popularity which he certainly has lost by the disappointment to which he subjected his adherents on his liberation from the Tower. He has been invited to dine with the electors of Westminster on the 31st of this month. In his reply to this invitation, after an assurance, somewhat out of place, that "at all times and in all places, whether their representative or not, he will always be found ready to do them any reasonable service in

Parliament or out," he concludes with facetiously remarking, that he hopes, "they will spend a pleasant day together, unless the Commander in Chief and a Secretary of State should draw out a numerous army, with a train of artillery, to declare war in our streets against roast beef."—All this in a reply to a card of invitation to a tavern dinner!

#### JOHN GALE JONES.

This unfortunate man has scarcely been liberated from Newgate for one offence, when he is remanded to prison for another. On the 20th instant he was tried, in the Court of King's Bench, for a libel tending to defame Lord Castlereagh. The libel, as proved in court, was certainly a very gross one. It accused his Lordship, in a placard announcing a question for debate at the British Forum, of a flagrant violation of the privileges of a British subject, in ordering a Mr. Finnerty away from Walcheren; and of a cowardly attack on the character of an innocent individual, from motives of revenge. It likewise charged him with being the murderer of a man of the name of Orr, in Ireland; and pronounced his conduct in that instance to be deserving of universal abhorrence. It challenged him to come forward and plead his cause at the British Forum, before independent Englishmen, or to be for ever consigned to infamy: and he not appearing, it pronounced him, in a subsequent hand-bill, to have been found guilty of all that had been laid to his charge. At the same time it was the fact that the affair of Orr had happened before Lord Castlereagh was Chief Secretary of Ireland; and that the order for apprehending Finnerty was issued without his privity.

Lord Ellenborough, in his charge to the

Jury, observed, that a malignant spirit was evident throughout the whole of the publication. "Lord Castlereagh is summoned to attend this mock tribunal. They call him to a trial, on pain of infamy. They prejudice him, and then they offer him a fair trial. They call him before men, whose very meeting is an offence to the laws. I have heard of clubs assuming this authority in another kingdom, and bitterly has that unhappy country suffered from this cause. The Jacobin clubs first took upon them to judge of public characters. They rose in their objects, and soon learned to strike at the laws, at the throne, at every thing that was sacred, and dear, and dignified.—I love free discussion. I love inquiry into all that concerns the public interest and private happiness of man. It is the entire wish of my heart to give perfect freedom of thought and word, within the wise boundary of the laws. The press is free; but if the writer will abuse its freedom to the injury of others, he acts at his peril. Men will be malignant, and human life would be unsafe, and human happiness a name, if every man had the power of forcing his neighbour before the eye of the world, stripping him of the privacy which our laws still reverence, and throwing his fame and feelings at the mercy of the thousands who will rejoice to insult him because they have the power to give him pain." His Lordship concluded with pronouncing the publication in question a most malignant and pestilent libel.

The Jury without hesitation found the defendant guilty.

Mr. Finnerty, charged with writing a libel of similar purport in the *Morning Chronicle*; suffered judgment to go by default.

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### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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G. G; FRATERNICUS; and J. S. H; will be inserted.

LAICUS; W. R.; A SUBSCRIBER; J. M. S.; H. B. T.; HAUD INSONS; and C. W.; are under consideration.

T. S. came too late for the present number, but will be inserted in the next.

We are not aware that the intentions of C. W. have been anticipated.

The first volume of Davy's *System of Divinity* has been returned to the publisher.